CAMPAIGN 2017, 4 | SLICE OF LIFE, 46 | NOTE FROM NANCY, 57

glastonbury LIFE
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## Jen Staskiewicz uses personal experience to educate

*See story on page 48*

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The FINER TEAM

# glastonbury LIFE

**November 2017**
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## QUOTE OF NOTE:

"A buddy of mine at the pottery studio was taking jewelry and it seemed like they were having so much fun so I took one and I was hooked." – *Carolyn "Carol" Teschke*

**See story page 23**

## ON THE COVER

**Jen Staskiewicz started blogging about her vitiligo after one of her daughters was diagnosed with the autoimmune disease.**

**Photo by Lisa Brisson**
See story page 48

4 Town council candidates
18 School board candidates
28 Chef Daniel Stevens
30 Business notes
34 Park for all seasons
35 News roundup
37 Living your best LIFE
41 Student voices
44 Student of the month
52 The end of an era
54 November calendar
55 Event spotlight
56 Letters to the editor

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CAMPAIGN 2017

# Incumbents hope to stay on town council

## Democrats looking to pick up seats

**by Nancy Thompson**
*Editor*

As they are every two years, all nine seats on the town council are on the line this month. Republicans hold six seats, the maximum allowable, and hope to keep that majority. Democrats, who are running six candidates, would like to increase their influence on the council. Voters will be able to cast ballots for no more than six candidates, and the top nine will be seated.

As always, Glastonbury LIFE has submitted a list of questions covering a range of subjects to each candidate. In alphabetical order, here are the candidates' responses to our questions as well as a bit of information about themselves.

### Jill Barry
**Democratic incumbent**

Jill Barry is a CPA who worked in public accounting and corporate finance. She works for GW Association Management Solutions in non-profit management. She has three children, Emmett, Kaye and Jameson, and is very active in PTOs, and classrooms, the school store, school committees, as a teacher at St. Dunstan's, with the FLL Robotics team coach and in the Glastonbury Community Action Partnership.

Jill Barry

**Taxes have been a major issue in town. How would you provide necessary town services with minimum effect on the local tax rate?**

Taxes are high in Glastonbury and, like you, I want to keep them as low as possible. The schools, libraries, parks, senior services, atmosphere, not to mention the sheer beauty and safety of downtown, make Glastonbury a great place to live. There are ways to maintain these services without raising taxes. One way is to explore streamlining town and board of education services to eliminate duplicity and reduce costs. Another way is to evaluate the revenue making opportunities in town. Strong financial decisions, strategic planning and a new outlook on town policies will ensure Glastonbury maintains its high level of excellence while keeping property taxes in check.

**Do you believe it's important for the town to continue to acquire open space? Why or why not?**

Open space is a trademark of Glastonbury and I will work to perpetuate its existence. With smart decisions, the acquisition of open space is viable in these economic times. By purchasing open space, the town limits development, which will reduce the dollars spent on providing town services to the would-be citizens. I encourage farming in Glastonbury and will work with the farmers to determine what they need. The benefits of decisions made now will be enjoyed by us and future generations.

**What one change would you like to see in the town center?**

Parking!

**Other than the subjects above, what do you see as the most important issue facing the town, and what would you do about it?**

Temperatures in our elementary school classrooms reached and maintained an average temperature of 95 degrees for too many days in September. Some, if not most, reaching 100 degrees in the afternoon sun. So, while we were enjoying the final heat wave of 2017 in our air conditioned homes, cars and offices, our children were drenched in sweat, suffered heat exhaustion and were failing to learn. It is unconscionable to ask our teachers and staff to work in these conditions. The town council failed to take action again. I will continue the fight!

Historically, the majority of the town council has lacked respect for the board of education. If the budget woes continue at the state level, we are going to have to pull together to make the best decisions for all the residents. I am not sure the current majority can do that.

**Is there anything else you'd like voters to know about you?**

Recently, Glastonbury adopted an ordinance to ban smoking and all tobacco products in parks and recreation areas. I proposed this ordinance last year and was met with resistance but I persisted and finally prevailed. I do not give up!

As a parent, I am concerned about the environment in which my children grow. I would value the opportunity to continue contributing my time, expertise, and dedication to Glastonbury.

### Stewart "Chip" Beckett, III
**Republican incumbent**

A veterinarian and former president of the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association, Beckett serves as chairman of the town council and is a former director of the Glastonbury Chamber of Commerce.

Steward "Chip" Beckett III

**Taxes have been a major issue in town. How would you provide necessary town services with minimum effect on the local tax rate?**

Taxes have always been an issue, because no one likes paying them. I have always tried to look at afford-

ability of taxes and tried to ensure that increases were not excessive to our residents of the least means. The way to control spending, as in any enterprise with people delivering services, is to employ less people. Unfortunately, less people translate to fewer services if there is not a work flow change to improve efficiency. We have lost approximately 30 town positions since 2000. We have adjusted pension plans and health care to provide valuable benefits to our deserving employees, while ensuring affordability for the taxpayer. Our effective Capital Improvement Program allows us to do maintenance of infrastructure for tens of thousands of dollars, versus replacement for millions, without the cost of any interest. We have also been effective doing infill economic development so town costs remain relatively stable, but we increase the grand list substantially to offset spending increases from inflation.

**Do you believe it's important for the town to continue to acquire open space? Why or why not?**

I do believe in open space preservation for two reasons. The cost of servicing a residential home with town services and schools almost always exceeds the taxes those homes pay, so we control tax increases. We historically have paid roughly the same amount to buy an acre of land as to provide school services for a single child for a year. The purchase is a single event, the services go on annually. The second reason is that Glastonbury has a unique culture that featured farms and forests. While we are largely a mature community, we are not a fully developed community with our public lands. If people wanted to select a fully developed community, there are many in the area; hardly any have our mixture of shopping, dining with farms and forest trails almost next door.

**What one change would you like to see in the town center?**

I think the next biggest thing is going to be to address streets and public transit. With new 400 apartments in our center, we want people to feel safe to move and commute on foot or by bicycle rather than cars. Any walker or cyclist removes a problem of traffic and parking. As an example, the center has about 1,000 parking spaces, so 50 walkers and 50 cyclists decrease congestion and parking needs by 10 percent. Pedestrians and cyclists will save millions in capital costs for road widening, municipal parking facilities, and congestion for the rest of the town.

## Lawrence J. Byar
### Republican incumbent

Lawrence Byar, a senior commercial loan officer at TD Bank, holds undergraduate and graduates degrees from the University of Connecticut. A member of the town council since 2011, he has served on the board of assessment appeals and the board of finance in Monroe. He is a board member of MARC, Inc. and was a national board member of the Make-A-Wish Foundation of America for 10 years.

Lawrence J. Byar

**Taxes have been a major issue in town. How would you provide necessary town services with minimum effect on the local tax rate?**

I am confident that we can continue to maintain these services while keeping taxes under control by identifying additional revenue opportunities and continuing to find opportunities to increase efficiencies on the expenditure side.

Continued smart economic development will help increase com-

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Wethersfield $239,000

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Glastonbury $699,900

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mercial tax revenues and lessen the tax burden on homeowners. As always, it is important that development not disturb the rural charm of our community.

Given the multi-million dollar financial burden the state is now placing upon us, it is more important than ever to find additional ways to increase our operating efficiencies. This can be done through additional regional collaboration, the increased usage of solar power and tightly controlling expenses.

**Do you believe it's important for the town to continue to acquire open space? Why or why not?**

I strongly support the continued acquisition of open space through the town's Land Acquisition Fund. This fund has been overwhelmingly supported during voter referendums and has been praised by many as one of the most successful programs in the state. Over the last 25 years, we have acquired and preserved hundreds of acres of open space to insure these lands will remain undeveloped and available to all residents to enjoy.

**What one change would you like to see in the town center?**

Vehicular traffic flow and parking changes are needed. I firmly believe that the recently approved traffic improvements will help alleviate congestion in the town's core once completed.

Going forward, we need to work with business and property owners to identify and implement ways to increase and improve parking. This will make it much easier for residents to visit our beautiful town center and the many businesses that are available to them.

**Other than the subjects above, what do you see as the most important issue facing the town, and what would you do about it?**

Given the recent elimination by the state of all education aid ($6 million plus), and the potential for us to have to pay millions of dollars more annually for state obligations, it is imperative that we continue to look for ways to control both short-term and long-term expenses. We must continue to insure that all expenditures are necessary and justifiable. I will continue to work hard to insure that all budgets are reasonable and supportable and result in the best value for every tax dollar.

**Is there anything else you'd like voters to know about you?**

It has been my honor to serve on your town council the last six years. I ask for your support and pledge to continue to work with you and the other members of our town's government to ensure that Glastonbury remains one of the best places to live in Connecticut, with a top-tier school system, beautiful parks and numerous community services. With your support on November 7, I will continue to work tirelessly for all of our town's residents.

## Deb Carroll

### Democratic challenger

Deb Carroll holds a B.A. from Holy Cross and a M.A. in English Literature from Boston College. She spent seventeen years as a high school teacher and administrator and served as a Cub Scout den leader for five years. She is mother to three school-age boys, and participated in the Women's March in Washington, D.C. in January of 2017.

**Taxes have been a major issue in town. How would you provide necessary town services with minimum effect on the local tax rate?**

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The services we provide in town reach all of us, from seniors to students. To sustain this support network with a minimum effect on our tax rate, it is imperative that we take a close look at the budget as a whole. We must look for ways to consolidate services and eliminate any redundancies while maintaining the essential services we offer our residents.

**Do you believe it's important for the town to continue to acquire open space? Why or why not?**

I strongly support the continued acquisition of open space in town. As we continually promote development in both business and housing, it's essential that we maintain a balance with the green space that makes Glastonbury an attractive town to both residents and prospective homeowners. This continued preservation of open space is a long-term investment in the future of our town.

**What one change would you like to see in the town center?**

I would love to see our beautiful town center become more pedestrian-friendly: more sidewalks, increased bike paths and better parking options so that folks can spend the day on foot, enjoying the shops and restaurants that anchor the heart of Glastonbury.

Other than the subjects above, what do you see as the most important issue facing the town, and what would you do about it?

Our schools have been a source of pride for generations. However, in the absence of guaranteed state support and looming budget cuts, we are at a crossroads. As a town, we must decide what kind of education we want to provide our children. I will fight to preserve the quality of education we provide. All of us, whether we currently have children in the schools or not, are stewards of the education of the youth of Glastonbury. This is a tremendous responsibility, and it is up to every citizen to uphold it.

**Is there anything else you'd like voters to know about you?**

I would love for voters to know that while I am a novice in the political arena, I am an avid learner, and am dedicated to better understanding the varied needs of all our constituents. I look forward to speaking with as many residents as possible!

## Kurt Cavanaugh
### Republican incumbent

Kurt Cavanaugh, a retired Hartford Firefighter after 33 year of service is the town council's majority leader. He has been a resident of Glastonbury for 52 years, is a graduate of Glastonbury High School, holds a Bachelor's degree from Central Connecticut State University, and is a graduate of the Connecticut Police Academy and Hartford Fire Department Training Academy.

**Taxes have been a major issue in town. How would you provide necessary town services with minimum effect on the local tax rate?**

We should seek all available state and federal grants, focus our budget on essential services – public health and safety, education, road maintenance – and curtail spending wherever we can.

**Do you believe it's important for the town to continue to acquire open space? Why or why not?**

I have supported all earlier open space bond issues. A down economy is a good time to buy property. If we wait for a more robust economy, we will pay more for the same land.

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**What one change would you like to see in the town center?**

Designing a transition from the commercial uses of the town center to the residential neighborhoods that surround it. Residential areas need to be protected from the impacts of nearby commercial development while still benefiting from easy, walkable access to those products and services. This is the potential vitality of our town center: High density, stable residential areas in walking distance to shops and services. It's a pattern many towns dream of and we already have it. The challenge is how to make them compatible.

**Other than the subjects above, what do you see as the most important issue facing the town, and what would you do about it?**

I feel we stand at a turning point in how we view our selves, and how we are viewed by others, for generations to come. In 1993 Glastonbury celebrated its 300th year anniversary as a town. During our third century, "The American Century," Glastonbury became a destination. What kind of a community we will be when Glastonbury celebrates its 400th year anniversary, what kind of quality of life choices will we have for our residents, whether we shape the future in the image of our hopes is ours to determine by our actions and our choices.

**Is there anything else you'd like voters to know about you?**

I believe my extensive experience in municipal government, both as a firefighter for the City of Hartford for 33 years, and as a 22-year member of the Glastonbury Town Council, enables me to bring a wide range of knowledge to elected office. I understand how things look from the bottom as well as from the top. I have been appointed by three governors to the Police Officer Standards and Training Council. I have been a member of the Capital Region Council of Governments policy and transportation committees. With my time in local government, I have established many personal relationships that I can rely on for advice, assistance and expertise in areas that I may not be versed in.

## William T. Finn
### Republican incumbent

A sales professional, Finn has served on the town council, the town plan and zoning commission, the youth and family commission and the board of directors of the youth football association.

William T. Finn

**Taxes have been a major issue in town. How would you provide necessary town services with minimum effect on the local tax rate?**

The most important issue facing Glastonbury residents in 2017 is the tax burden that they will face in 2018 and for many years to come. The two major drivers of our tax liability are the costs of our town's operations and the budget for its board of education.

For years, the town Council and the board of education have both been responsible and effective managers of their respective budgets. As one of your town council members, I have advocated, and will continue to advocate, for discretion as we monitor Glastonbury's capital improvement budget. We must continue to prioritize our critical infrastructure needs, and perhaps identify and defer other less critical projects, depending on the state's financial situation next year and beyond.

**Do you believe it's important for the town to continue to acquire**

# Together, Let's Move Glastonbury Forward

Sensible, pragmatic leadership that respects your tax dollars and your priorities

- ★ only approve capital improvement projects that are necessary and meaningful
- ★ ensure education dollars are spent wisely, and families treated respectfully
- ★ aggressively pursue recovery of the $2.4 million to keep the Riverfront Park boathouse safe for all
- ★ preserve our town's character with open space purchases and economic development that fit in
- ★ review the Town Charter for the first time in decades to guarantee its policies meet today's practical realities.

# VOTE ROW A ★ TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7TH

## Guarantee Glastonbury's future:
## support smart spending that doesn't ask you for higher fees and taxes.

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Deb Carroll

Mary LaChance

Jake McChesney

Larry Niland

Jill Barry

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# VOTE ROW A ★ TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7TH

Paid for by the Glastonbury Democratic Town Committee Mike Lepore, Treasurer. Approved By Candidates Listed.

**open space? Why or why not?**

The Open Space Acquisition Fund has been an effective tool that Glastonbury has used for attempting to control growth and sprawl. For the record, I have supported the purchase of several parcels in the town in the past, and our town has benefited from those purchases. With the state's current economic condition, however, I question the need and priority for growing this Fund at this time. Given the present budget crises facing Connecticut, I strongly believe that future purchases must demonstrate a clear and strategic benefit to our town.

**What one change would you like to see in the town center?**

Glastonbury's town Center continues to be a strong and viable economic engine. I support the Main Street improvement projects, and I believe that the enhancements to our town center will positively influence Glastonbury's future growth.

**Is there anything else you'd like voters to know about you?**

Most importantly, I would like all Glastonbury residents to know that I am the father of three wonderful children whom I love very much; that I am, and I will continue to be, a fearless advocate for all residents; that I take their trust in me very seriously; and that I am humbled by their support and encouragement. I appreciate your continued support, and ask for your vote on November 7. Thank you.

## Tom Gullotta

### Democratic incumbent

From running a large children's mental health organization and teaching at Eastern Connecticut State University to writing and editing scholarly texts on adolescents and their families, Tom Gullotta has led and continues to live a busy life in public service, writing /editing, and philanthropic activities.

**Taxes have been a major issue in town. How would you provide necessary town services with minimum effect on the local tax rate?**

Stop funding "nice" but not necessary projects. For example, did the taxpayers of Glastonbury really need a new $750,000 town hall lobby and parking lot?

**Do you believe it's important for the town to continue to acquire open space? Why or why not?**

Studies repeatedly show that housing costs $1.17 in services for every tax dollar collected! Think plowing, police, fire, and especially education. If you want to control taxes, then purchase open space. Purchasing open space decreases taxes while increasing the value of the existing housing stock.

**What one change would you like to see in the town center?**

I define the town center from the East Hartford line to the Hubbard Green. With that understanding, north of Katz's Hardware to the East Hartford town line making that stretch of land "greener" and more inviting to walkers with plantings, benches, and public art.

**Other than the subjects above, what do you see as the most important issue facing the town, and what would you do about it?**

With state aid disappearing managing the "necessary" needs of the town.

chris balfanz
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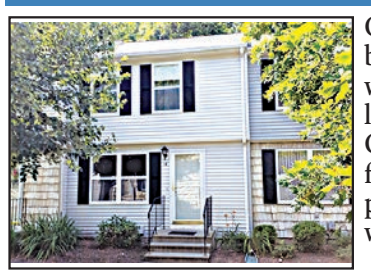

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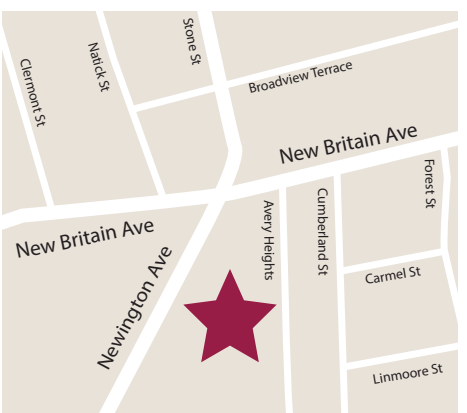


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## Mary LaChance
### Democratic challenger

Mary LaChance is an IT program director at Travelers Insurance, where she is responsible for program and budget management of a multi-million dollar portfolio. She is the co-founder and co-president of the Glastonbury Robotics and Engineering Club, running the FIRST LEGO League program. She has a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

**Taxes have been a major issue in town. How would you provide necessary town services with minimum effect on the local tax rate?**

Glastonbury residents are absolutely right to be concerned about taxes. The biggest threat to Glastonbury's taxes are the state budget issues. The state budget will have issues for at least the next 10 years due to underfunded state pensions. To fix the budget gap for the state, there are proposals to push this liability onto the towns, which could cause Glastonbury to have to cut services or increase property taxes. I absolutely disagree with this approach. The towns did not create this problem; the state did. We need strong advocates on our town council to let the state know that we should not be responsible for fixing a problem we did not create.

**Do you believe it's important for the town to continue to acquire open space? Why or why not?**

Open spaces are a benefit to all Glastonbury residents. They give residents quiet places to walk, spend time with family, and reflect. The town needs the ability to purchase land when it comes up for sale if it's in line with the plan of conservation and development. This is tremendously important as our town continues to grow. However, I appreciate that the voters get to decide if money is added into the open space fund, since this is discretionary spending that affects our taxes.

**What one change would you like to see in the town center?**

I would like to see a focus on attracting more business to our town center. Personally, I would like Glastonbury to look into forming a business incubator to help entrepreneurs. This not only would help with increasing the tax base but it would also help Glastonbury's future competitive advantage, making it an even more attractive place to live. As new businesses come into town, we need to understand the impact on traffic, make sure there is adequate parking, and maintain walkability.

**Other than the subjects above, what do you see as the most important issue facing the town, and what would you do about it?**

I am passionate about education. Our schools are one of the biggest assets in Glastonbury. It is the main reason many people, including my family, moved to Glastonbury. To continue to maintain the quality of our schools, I would like to see the town, schools, and parents work more closely together. We need to work together to ensure the best decisions are made with our limited resources.

**Is there anything else you'd like voters to know about you?**

I co-founded the Glastonbury Robotics and Engineering Club by winning a grant from the Glastonbury Education Foundation.

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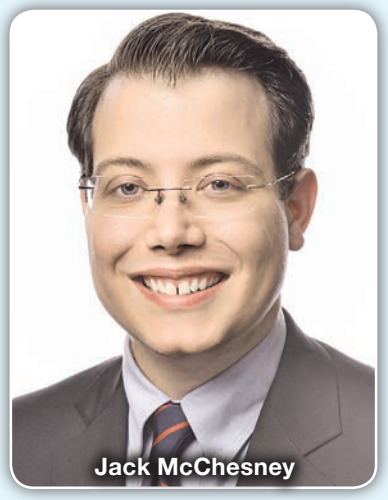
I believe it's important for Glastonbury to continue this innovative thinking and encourage involvement from all of its citizens. Our residents' depth of expertise across many fields is one of the greatest under-tapped resources

## Jake McChesney
### Democratic challenger

Jake McChesney graduated from Bates College and Pace University School of Law. He began his career as a prosecutor with the Connecticut Chief State's Attorney's Office, where he primarily argued criminal appeals before Connecticut's Appellate and Supreme Court. He has also practiced civil litigation in private practice and he currently works for Pratt & Whitney as a contract specialist.

**Taxes have been a major issue in town. How would you provide necessary town services with minimum effect on the local tax rate?**


Jack McChesney

A fair and reasonable tax burden is essential for Glastonbury's future success. I have spoken with numerous young couples who cannot afford to move here because of the high taxes on starter homes, and numerous current residents who fear that they are going to have to leave our town because they cannot afford their increasing costs. In today's fiscal reality, we must focus on spending that is necessary and which constitutes smart investments for our future. We will need to evaluate our budget for places to cut where we can. We must encourage the growth of private businesses in town and continue to control residential development through public land purchases. Finally, we will also need to realistically explore regional cost-sharing measures as part of the solution.

**Do you believe it's important for the town to continue to acquire open space? Why or why not?**

Public land purchases are a necessary tool to control our town character and tax burden. Such purchases ensure that development occurs at a pace which will not adversely affect our small-town feel or agricultural history. The purchase of open space also controls budget growth by limiting residential development which adds to our services costs. I absolutely believe it is important for our town to continue to smartly acquire open space.

**What one change would you like to see in the town center?**

A walkable town center is a key selling point for our town. Any downtown project should focus on increasing walkability. One change I would like to see is increased pedestrian access to our downtown businesses and facilities. I'd also like to see smarter placement of parking facilities and increased public transportation.

**Other than the subjects above, what do you see as the most important issue facing the town, and what would you do about it?**

Unfortunately, it appears that political leaders in Hartford are determined to address budgetary shortfalls through cutting significant state funding to municipalities, especially for education. Glastonbury has an education system which attracts young families to town, and which, in turn, grows our tax base and raises property values. Over the next few years, certain cuts and cost-saving measures will likely be necessary, but we must ensure that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the primary focus is on maintaining the qualities which have made our schools exemplary institutions in the region.

**Is there anything else you'd like voters to know about you?**

My wife and I moved to Glastonbury for its excellent schools, open spaces and small-town feel. Maintaining these qualities while wisely managing town finances to ensure a fair and reasonable tax burden for our citizens will define our success. I am running to make our town affordable for working families while preserving the assets that make it an attractive place to live.

## Larry Niland

### Democratic challenger

Larry Niland is a graduate of Penn State University with a degree in computer science. He has worked as an information technology specialist with the Town of West Hartford and has 27 years of municipal experience. He currently serves on the

town plan and zoning commission. A Glastonbury resident of 23 years, he lives with his wife and two children.

**Taxes have been a major issue in town. How would you provide necessary town services with minimum effect on the local tax rate?**

It is long past time that the town and the board of education eliminate duplication of services between the two bodies. No longer can it, nor should it, be about who controls what piece of the budget. Instead, it must be about how we can work together to best save taxpayer dollars while not impacting services necessary to our residents. Looking to the Town of West Hartford as an example, they have successfully combined human resources, finance, facilities and information technology departments, reducing their costs while not affecting services. Our budgets must be mindful to the needs and pocketbooks of our hard-working taxpayers.

**Do you believe it's important for the town to continue to acquire open space? Why or why not?**

Yes, I believe it is very important for the town to continue to acquire open space. New homes bring an increased demand on services from education to public safety and beyond, and those services require more tax dollars than the new homes will provide. Open space also contributes to the character and beauty of our town and their preservation is vital.

**What one change would you like to see in the town center?**

Parking. The popularity and development of the town center has created an increased demand for parking, and the number of parking spaces has not kept up with that demand. Space there is unfortunately limited, so the proposition of new parking remains difficult.

**Other than the subjects above, what do you see as the most important issue facing the town, and what would you do about it?**

We must do all that we can to allow our seniors to age in place. Glastonbury is their home and we should do all we can to keep them here. Seniors consume far fewer services and their rising taxes continue to make it increasingly difficult to stay in the homes that they have loved for many years. Glastonbury does provide some relief to seniors

but it is not enough. We can and should do better.

**Is there anything else you'd like voters to know about you?**

My entire career has been in technology. We need to make wise technological investments to keep our town moving forward on both the municipal as well as the educational sides of the budget. If we fail to have vision, we will pay dearly in the end.

We also need to expect a return on our technology investments. Technology can and does reduce person-hours required on numerous projects. Through time and attrition we should be able to expect our workforce to be reduced in a corresponding manner.

## George Norman
### Republican challenger

A retired Navy officer, George Norman was the captain of two nuclear submarines and director of budget analysis for the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. He is a vice president for a large financial services company. He has an M.A. in National Security Strategy from the Naval War College, an MBA from Clark, and a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Geroge Norman

**Taxes have been a major issue in town. How would you provide necessary town services with minimum effect on the local tax rate?**

We need to think about taxes like anything else. We don't always buy the least expensive house, car, or whatever. Instead, we consider what we can afford and shop for the best value. In that context, I believe Glastonbury offers great value with top-rated schools, great public spac-

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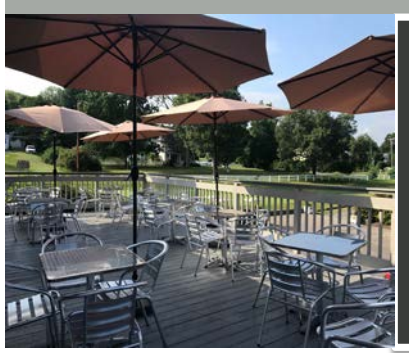

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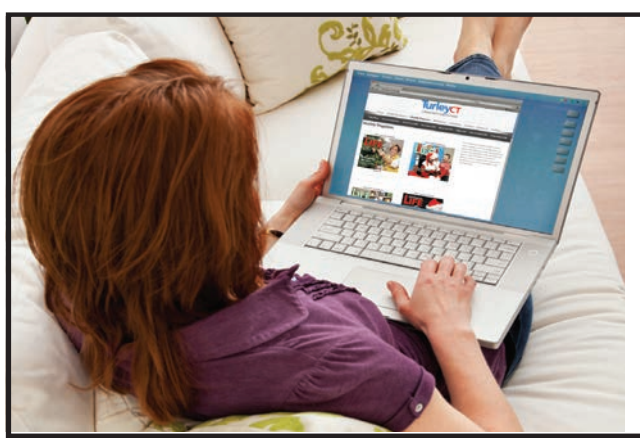

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es, and high-quality services; all while keeping the mill rate increases to an average of just 1.68 percent over the last four years. I will ensure we keep that discipline by treating the public's money as if it was my own. I will challenge all spending to ensure it's necessary and that lower cost alternatives are considered. A prime example is the original school air conditioning proposal of $19 million that was questioned by the majority of the town council and will now cost about $3 million. That's the type of discipline that we must continue as a town.

**Do you believe it's important for the town to continue to acquire open space? Why or why not?**

Yes, I grew up on a dairy farm in eastern Connecticut and part of what attracted me to Glastonbury was the rural feel of the town and its rich agricultural history. We need to continue to protect that.

**What one change would you like to see in the town center?**

We need to fix the parking; especially Eric Town Square. It's a detractor to me on a weekend night; and it must be a negative consideration for additional businesses growth. I'm not suggesting we become West Hartford with large urban parking garages; but some expansion of the exiting parking garage would be a great first step. I think this is an ideal candidate for a private/public partnership with local businesses.

**Other than the subjects above, what do you see as the most important issue facing the town, and what would you do about it?**

The elephant in the room is the state budget and how it will impact us. This is the reason I am running for town council. I was director of budgeting on the Joint Chiefs of Staff when sequestration was enacted to reduce the military's budget by 10 percent. I have the financial experience to evaluate budget requests for the best value, to ensure alignment to long-term strategy, and to ultimately decide on the best options.

**Is there anything else you'd like voters to know about you?**

When I retired from the Navy, I could have lived anywhere; but chose Glastonbury to call home. My daughter is a 2016 graduate of Glastonbury High School and my son is a sophomore at GHS. My wife is a music teacher in the Glastonbury Public Schools. This is our home; and I want to ensure future generations can enjoy Glastonbury as much as we do.

## Whit Osgood
### Republican incumbent

Whit Osgood has over 15 years of municipal government experience and currently serves as Vice Chairman on the Glastonbury Town Council. Prior to joining the Town Council he served on the Glastonbury Planning and Zoning Commission. He is self employed as a commercial real estate broker and consultant and has lived in

Glastonbury for over 30 years.

**Taxes have been a major issue in town. How would you provide necessary town services with minimum effect on the local tax rate?**

Tax increases that are greater than residents' increases in income are unsustainable unless people are willing to give up control of an ever greater share of their income. I believe we need to keep increases in

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Art clockwise: Katherine Simmons (oil), Jane Zisk (acrylic), Ed Hicks (oil)

town spending in-line with inflation and wage increases and work to increase our tax base to minimize individuals' tax increases. Increases in property taxes are a function of town and board of education spending, growth in the grand list and reimbursements from the state. As of this writing, with no state budget, reimbursements from the State and the proposed transfer of the cost of teacher's pensions to municipalities could leave a $6 plus million dollar hole in the town's budget. This is a significant issue the town will have to address this year and in coming years. The town has done a good job in keeping town spending under control and in line with inflation while maintaining the level of town services.

We have been fortunate in being able to increase our grand list with commercial development, notably on Western Boulevard, and have worked to modify our ordinances to encourage future appropriate development. Continuing our practices of the past several years, we must scrutinize and prioritize all spending to assure that municipal spending does not increase at a rate greater than our residents ability to pay and that we are delivering services in the most cost-effective manner possible.

**Do you believe it's important for the town to continue to acquire open space? Why or why not?**

With residents' support, Glastonbury has been a leader in land acquisition for open space preservation and to provide for municipal parks and facilities. Given that resources to acquire land are finite, it is important that the process going forward continue to prioritize opportunities and selectively purchase properties which contribute to the quality of life in town.

**What one change would you like to see in the town center?**

Glastonbury is fortunate in having a vibrant town center in which residents like to work, shop, eat and mingle. The planning commission and town council spent considerable time evaluating and revising our ordinance to provide greater flexibility for new development downtown while preserving the nature and appeal of the town center. Completing the scheduled improvements to the downtown in 2018, particularly on Hebron Avenue between Main Street and New London Turnpike will continue to improve the vibrancy, walkability, and bike-ability of our town center.

**Is there anything else you'd like voters to know about you?**

With over 15 years of municipal government experience, currently as vice chairman on the Glastonbury Town Council, I know how to work with my fellow council members and the town manager to control town spending while continuing to provide cost-effective services. Glastonbury's AAA bond rating is a tribute to our sound financial management. I believe my experience on the town council and my background in finance and commercial real estate provides needed perspective on the town council. I would appreciate you support on November 7 and look forward to working with you to keep Glastonbury the great place to live, work and raise children that it is. **GL**

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CAMPAIGN 2017

# Three incumbents, one newcomer seek school board seats

**by Nancy Thompson**
*Editor*

Four candidates are running for three seats on the board of education this year. Candidates, two from each party, are Republican incumbent Rosemary Coggeshall, Democratic incumbent Douglas Foyle, Republican incumbent Eric George, and Democratic challenger David Peniston, Jr.

Voters will be able to cast ballots for no more than two candidates, and the top three will be seated.

As always, Glastonbury LIFE has submitted a list of four questions, covering a range of subjects, to each candidate. Candidates replied and also submitted a brief biography.

In alphabetical order, here are the candidates' responses to our questions as well as a bit of information about themselves.

## Rosemary Coggeshall
### GOP incumbent

Rosemary Coggeshall is a certified occupational safety professional who also substitute-teaches in local school systems. Rosemary and her husband have two boys, one at the high school and one at Gideon Welles. Rosemary believes in community service; she frequently participates in volunteer opportunities at the schools, her church and within her town.

**How would you provide necessary education services with a**

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**minimum of expense?**

Keeping costs down and quality high is a constant challenge. Glastonbury has always had a lower per pupil expenditure than similar school districts based on student performance relative to net expenditure per student. This means Glastonbury consistently provides a superior education while spending less per student.

It is essential to continually scrutinize the Board budget, ensuring that every tax dollar is spent judiciously and most efficiently. I support grant-funded initiatives that benefit our children's education, and encourage our administrators to always pursue avenues to improve education without increasing costs.

Our award-winning public school system is renowned locally, nationally, and internationally. Investing in professional development is an essential component for student learning. Our staff is consistently recognized, locally and nationally for their teaching skills and for inspiring our children. Other factors conducive to student success are reasonable class sizes along with comfortable and safe facilities.

I will continue to work with my board colleagues to ensure fiscally-responsible budgeting with vigilant oversight to ensure that we continue to provide the quality education that our town is so proud of.

**What are the most important education issues facing the town, and what would you do about them?**

The state's budget crisis has imposed financial challenges to many Towns and their school systems. We must maintain our high quality education without significant state funding while always focusing on student learning and achievement.

The board will continue to assess areas for savings such as in contracting with lower utility costs, delaying technological upgrades, reducing education staff through attrition, and implementing spending freezes in supplies and equipment. We will spend prudently on professional and curriculum development to ensure a 21st-century learning environment for every student as they strive to succeed in today's global economy.

**It appears enrollment will be declining in the next few years. Do you envision any action beyond closing Eastbury Elementary School at the end of this school year?**

I do not see the need for any further action at this time. After carefully considering all pertinent information regarding classroom space and enrollment, the board made the difficult decision to close Eastbury. With this consolidation of resources, we will be able to maintain reasonable, consistent class sizes across the elementary schools while having open classrooms at each school to handle any unexpected challenges.

**Is there any other information voters might want to know about you?**

It is my passion for education that drives my enthusiasm to work collaboratively with board members to ensure an exceptional education on a very reasonable budget. It certainly would be an honor to be re-elected to our school board.

My professional service includes the following:

Glastonbury Board of Education since 2011

Board of education policy committee chair since 2012

Vice-chairman, Montville Public Safety Commission

Member, Uncas Health District

Member, Montville Board of Education

## Douglas Foyle
### Democratic incumbent

Douglas Foyle is the Board Secretary, Curriculum Committee Chair, and Facilities Committee Co-Chair, and a Board member

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since 2009. He is married and his children currently attend Glastonbury High School and they previously attended Naubuc Elementary School. He teaches government at Wesleyan University and has an undergraduate degree from Stanford University with honors and distinction and a Ph.D. from Duke University.

**How would you provide necessary education services with a minimum of expense?**

As a board member since 2009, I have provided pragmatic educational leadership supporting initiatives that not only improved education but saved the taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars. For example, the LINKS special education program allows students to be educated better and less-expensively here in Glastonbury. In my time on the board, I have often found that what works best educationally is often the least expensive option in the long run (see dougfoyle.wordpress.com).

**What are the most important education issues facing the town, and what would you do about them?**

The state's fiscal troubles are creating serious challenges for education in Glastonbury and threatening to undermine decades of educational progress. Given these circumstances, the board instituted a hiring freeze last year and eliminated a number of items such as buses that could be delayed for a year. Next year, the board will face fundamental choices about our education system when those delayed purchases can no longer be put off. These reductions already have resulted in math classes of 28 at the high school, larger class sizes at the elementary level, and supply shortages affecting the delivery of our educational curriculum. The board has recently heard from curriculum directors in a number of subjects including math, English, science, foreign language, health/physical education, and counseling about the negative consequences the current situation is having and the very dire consequences if even more extensive cuts need to be made next year. My main motivation in seeking another term on the board is to use my knowledge and experience to manage this situation in the most educationally sound manner possible.

**It appears enrollment will continue in the next few years. Do you envision any action beyond closing Eastbury Elementary School at the end of this school year?**

At this point, the main task for the board is to implement the redistricting plan it adopted for next year along with all the logistical decisions and actions needed to insure that it moves forward effectively. After that, the board's task is to manage the system effectively as the grades with lower school populations move into the high school. Given the current student population projections and the capacity of our schools, no further school closings will be needed. As the board manages this issue, I will continue to welcome public input on the many complexities surrounding this issue.

**Is there anything other information voters might want to know about you?**

Since joining the board in 2009, whether citizens phoned, emailed, or spoke at a Board meeting, I listened, responded, and integrated their concerns into my decisions. I will continue to use citizen input and my best judgment to move education forward. See dougfoyle.wordpress.com for more information.


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## Eric George
### Republican incumbent

Eric George is an attorney and the president of the Insurance Association of Connecticut with extensive experience in the local and state political arenas. He is a graduate of UConn and UConn Law School and has two children in the Glastonbury public school system. He and his family have lived in Glastonbury for nearly 20years.

Eric George

**How would you provide necessary education services with a minimum of expense?**

Glastonbury benefits from an exemplary public school system, providing high level education services at a reasonable expense to taxpayers. This equates to a high-value, and highly efficient, school system that readies our children for 21st-century learning and employment.

This is evidenced by comparing our educational successes to our overall costs.

Glastonbury academically outpaces both towns that are similar to it, as well as the state overall. In terms of the most recent SAT results, Glastonbury outscored comparable towns by 10 percent in math and 1 percent in English Language Arts, and outscored the state average by 17 percent and 11 percent, respectively.

Additionally, Glastonbury fares very well when comparing our per-pupil cost to those of similar towns. In Glastonbury, our annual per-pupil cost is nearly 4 percent less than the cost to those other towns.

We achieve this high quality and cost-effective school system by hiring dedicated and proficient teachers at reasonable salaries and benefits. We also focus our other expenditures on those areas that provide us with the greatest return on our investment.

**What are the most important education issues facing the town, and what would you do about them?**

First, we must continue to provide our students with an outstanding education in an efficient and cost-effective manner, especially in light of Connecticut's current budget challenges. The state's economic struggles have come to a head and Glastonbury could suffer from a significant loss in state funding. We must continue to use our fiscal resources prudently and in a way that provides high quality education services.

Second, we must improve our learning environments to give students the best opportunity to achieve academic success. The Board has studied the issue of providing air conditioning in our schools and we have found an air conditioning option that is 90 percent less expensive than other cooling alternatives.

Third, we must retain the highest quality teaching staff by providing them with the professional development resources they need to be the most effective educators for our children.

**It appears enrollment will continue in the next few years. Do you envision any action beyond closing Eastbury Elementary School at the end of this school year?**

I think that we have adequately addressed the issue of declining enrollment, provided the forecasted numbers are realized. Closing Eastbury was extremely difficult, but we reached this bi-partisan decision after extensive analysis, deliberation and public input.

**Is there anything other information voters might want to know about you?**

I am proud of Glastonbury's public education system. It is the

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bedrock of our community. My business expertise provides me with the skills needed to prudently utilize our resources to achieve favorable results and I would be honored to have the opportunity to continue to serve our town.

## David Peniston
### Democratic challenger

David is married and has two children, a 19-year-old daughter at UConn and a 15-year-old son at Glastonbury High School. He is a 1987 graduate of the University of Massachusetts and has worked as a workers compensation auditor for the Travelers Insurance Company for the past 11 years.

**How would you provide necessary education services with a minimum of expense?**

As many of us know, a good portion of our taxes is spent on education. With this in mind, I would set up a meeting with Superintendent Alan Bookman and Town Manager Richard Johnson to discuss two things: Are there any services that

David Peniston

can be consolidated to help our town run more efficiently, and have we explored all options for possibly better and more affordable health care for our teaching community that fits their stages in life and current needs.

**What are the most important education issues facing the town, and what would you do about them?**

One of the biggest issues is the governor's current proposal to cut $5 million from the Educational Cost-Sharing grant to Glastonbury. I refuse to accept that our only two options are laying off teachers or higher taxes. I would like our state representative to set up a town hall meeting with our governor so that he can personally hear our successes in regards to being one of the better towns at being fiscally responsible. Why should our town be penalized? May a compromise can be reached.

**It appears enrollment will continue in the next few years. Do you envision any action beyond closing Eastbury Elementary School at the end of this school year?**

I feel that two factors need to be greatly evaluated, researched and discussed in regards to future and current enrollment. They are the following: 1: with the explosion of the building of housing and apartment units, we should be evaluating the demographics of the current residents in these current units' and 2: we also need to make sure that there is an accounting of our older residents who have moved from Glastonbury and are being replaced by younger homeowners with children.

**Is there anything other information voters might want to know about you?**

I grew up in a family of educators, and my parents instilled in me that anything can be accomplished with hard work and perseverance. They also stressed the importance of being active and giving back to your community. I have applied these things that my parents taught me and have volunteered as a rape crisis counselor and at a shelter for abused women and children. I have also volunteered in our town as a youth football coach, and I am a current member of the Glastonbury Human Relations Commission and the Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative. I hope to be elected to the Glastonbury Board of Education to not only make my family proud, but the entire proud that they elected someone who is willing to do what is necessary for our town to continue to be one of the best towns for our children to not only be educated in, but to live safely and prosper in. **GL**


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# ‘It makes you happy to be around’

## Artist takes joy in color, viruses

**by Mara Dresner**
*Staff Writer*

Carolyn “Carol” Teschke sees the world a bit differently than many people. For example, she thinks viruses hold a certain attraction.

“They’re fun; they’re beautiful. Viruses really are beautiful. They’re fabulous and so, so pretty,” said Teschke, a professor and associate department head for undergraduate education for the Department of Molecular & Cell Biology at UConn.

“I didn’t start out life thinking I was going to study viruses but they’re the coolest things. We learn about cells from studying them. They’re really spectacular.”

Growing up in Wisconsin, she was always attracted to the sciences, although when she had time, she took art classes.

“I really loved them, especially pottery. I always intended that when I’d grown up, I’d come back to that,” she said.

Carolyn Teschke, who many people call Carol, has a studio in a barn behind her home.

Photo by Todd Garabedian


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The life of a scientist requires a lot of training, however. After majoring in chemistry at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, she was off to grad school in Washington State, where she focused on biochemistry.

"I loved chemistry and I always loved biology. That made logical sense to me," she said.

Next came a move to Boston with her husband for her post-doctoral work.

"People in the biological sciences get their PhDs, and then we do a post-doc fellowship. We continue our training after we get our PhD. We eventually get a job around the time we're 105 years old. It's not an easy process," said Teschke, who studied at MIT.

That finally brought her to her position on the faculty at UConn.

"I mostly study viruses and teach the study of viruses," she said. "My work is funded by the National Institutes of Health. My group studies how viruses assemble when they infect cells. They need cells to do their thing. It uses the cell to generate new protein, new genomes, new parts. It has to make all those things and assemble itself. We're trying to understand the process of how it puts itself together."

She knows it can sound complex to a layperson.

"When talking to my father-in-law, what I tell him is the virus that infected the cell is kind of like a box of Ikea furniture. There's a bunch of parts and not very clear instructions. You get something at the end that's something like what the box looks like. The cell is like a little factory making parts," she said.

Carol Teschke often makes earrings.

Courtesy photos

Artist Carolyn "Carol" Teschke, switched to jewelry making after becoming discouraged in pottery.

When Teschke, who moved to Glastonbury in 1996, started at UConn, she had little time for non-academic activities. After achieving tenure and returning from a sabbatical, she realized she wanted to do something more.

"So I decided to take pottery classes but I got kind of stuck. I loved them in high school and thought they were so much fun. I really loved them for a long time, but artistically I got stuck and didn't know how to grow further," she said of the work she was doing at Wesleyan Potters in

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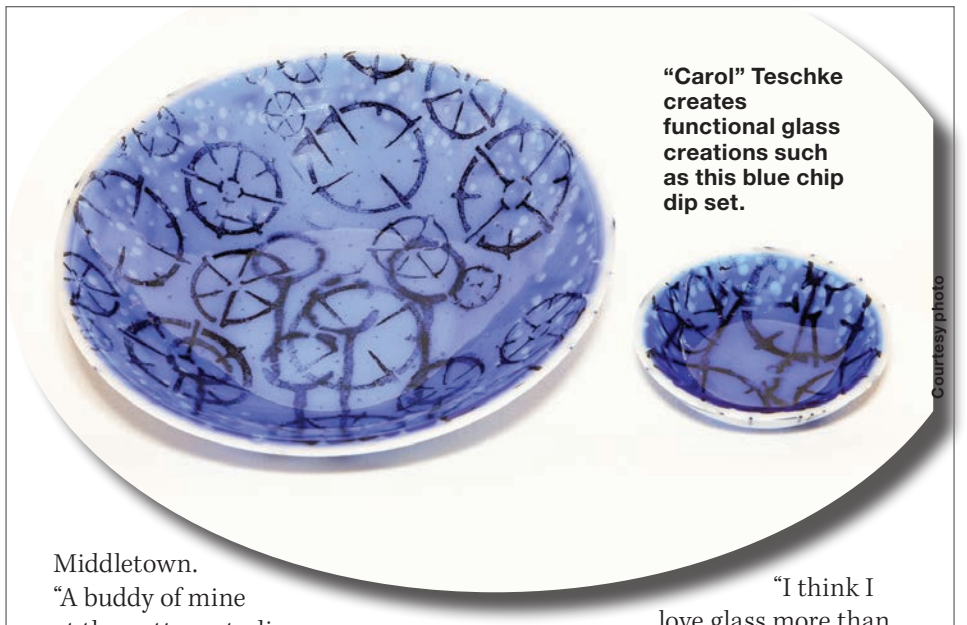

"Carol" Teschke creates functional glass creations such as this blue chip dip set.

Courtesy photo

Middletown.

"A buddy of mine at the pottery studio was taking jewelry and it seemed like they were having so much fun so I took one and I was hooked."

She took her first jewelry class in the mid-2000s and found she enjoyed the process.

"What I think was stuck with in pottery and found pleasurable with jewelry is [similar to] when you do an experiment, you think about the result you want. You think backward and how to get the result you want. It's similar with jewelry. I really like the process; it's very technical. With pottery I never found that. Sometimes I had a picture in my head but it hardly ever turned out that way," she said. "And there are so many tools I get to use with jewelry and they're all pretty."

**"I spend nearly all of my weekend at the barn, away from asking questions, with my radio on, happily making things; it's my happy place."**

**– Carolyn Teschke**

Teschke focuses on silver pieces with touches of gold or those that gold-filled.

"I just kind of launched into silver. I've been adding gold recently, now that I'm not quite so scared. Gold is expensive. If you screw up with silver, it's not the end of the world," she said.

She said she enjoys learning new styles and takes workshops, including distance workshops, turning the trips into mini-vacations.

She's also discovered a new medium: glass.

"I think I love glass more than I love jewelry. Glass happened by accident in a way. I was taking a jewelry workshop, learning to do seed bead necklaces, which I will never do again. They're tiny, tiny beads. [You need] the patience of a saint. I found out it's something I won't ever do again," she said.

However, she did enjoy working with focal beads, large handmade glass beads.

"The process is called flame-working. It's totally fun. You get your torch to about 2000 degrees. You melt the glass rods onto a fixed steel wire and you end up with beautiful glass beads. Sometimes it's called lampworking. I really, really loved it. You just have to sit really still for it. I really loved it, but physically I just couldn't do it," she explained.

Next, she began working with formed glass.

"You start with sheet glass, flat pieces of glass, and you make patterns on it. Flumping means the glass gets soft; it goes into mold at a high temperature and it will flump into mold and become bowl-shaped thing," she explained.

Teschke had found a new artistic love, making glass jewelry and functional objects, such as bowls and plates, in vibrant colors.

Teschke's work will be fea-

# Is the Flag Still There?

During the unsuccessful bombardment of Fort McHenry by the British warships (Sept. 13-14,1814), Francis Scott Key was inspired by the sight of the **American Flag** still flying. He wrote the words that were later set to music to become our National Anthem: "O say does that **star-spangled banner still wave**, over the land of the free, and the home of the brave."

Our flag and National Anthem represent our **Declaration of Independence** and our **Constitution. Failure to honor** and **to understand** this **relationship makes for** and **encourages** the present movement **towards socialism**, etc. When people seek to work out their problems or grievances **by attacking the structure of the ship they are on** out in the ocean, **such is destructive folly**. Doing so **ignorantly** or **willfully** makes for **personal and public loss**.

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**…ONE NATION, UNDER GOD**… our right to know that LIFE and LIBERTY are GOD-GIVEN RIGHTS, not the GRANT of GOVERNMENT. Our Constitution gives us a government limited to the delegated authority that "WE THE PEOPLE" allotted to each branch of civil government.

**…WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL**… LIBERTY is the love of individual independence, being free from tyrannical rule and control– a LIBERTY that does not degenerate into license. The Liberty Bell and the Statue of Liberty are fitting symbols. JUSTICE is "the virtue which consists in GIVING TO EVERYONE WHAT IS HIS DUE."Thus justice calls for law and equity, right rules and fair play for all. This explains the once prevailing concept in America– PUNISHMENT TO FIT THE CRIME.

To lose the meaning of OUR FLAG is to encourage the loss of our Republican form of government and our God-given, responsible pursuit of LIFE and LIBERTY.

"**REMEMBER**, O LORD, Thy tender mercies and Thy loving kindnesses; for they have been ever of old. **REMEMBER** not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to Thy mercy **REMEMBER** Thou me for Thy goodness' sake, O LORD." (Psalm 25:6-7). "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear Him. For he knoweth our frame; **HE REMEMBERETH** that we are dust" (Psalm 103:13,14). "**REMEMBER ME**, O LORD, with the favour that Thou bearest unto they people. O visit me with Thy salvation" (Psalm 106:4).

May you be BOTHERED to the point of being BLESSED. May our GRAND OLD FLAG remind us of our great American HERITAGE, "one nation **under God**" without Whose grace we cannot survive the erosion and corrosion of our day. May you look to the GOD OF TRUTH in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ (who said, "I amTHE TRUTH"– John 14:6), so that you might REST in the TRUTH of God'sWord ("the TRUTH shall make you free"– John 8:32) and the TRUTH of God's Son ("the SON shall make you free"–John 8:36). To RECEIVE HIM is to receive the **LIFE** and **LIBERTY** He alone can give (John 1:12).

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tured at the Wesleyan Potters' 62nd Annual Sale in November and December.

"Carol's work is of extremely high quality. I believe her scientific background contributes to her exacting technique as well as her inspired design which is unlike any I've seen. Her glass would complement any decor. Her jewelry is chic and refined," Mary Ruth Shields, artist and manager at the Wesleyan Potters Gallery/Shop, said.

Laura Nadeau met Teschke taking regular weekly classes in metals and jewelry at Wesleyan Potters.

"I think that Carol's work is strongly influenced by her science. She finds beauty in that tiny world that she explores. All you need to do is talk to her for five minutes about it and you can see and hear the appreciation she has for the miraculous complexity and beauty she finds in nature and it comes out in her work. You can find it in the shapes and colors of her jewelry and glass," Nadeau said. "She's a generous classmate and won't hesitate to tell you if she loves something that you're working on. It is fun to see the very confused look on someone's face at a workshop when she tells them that she likes what they are making and it makes her think of a particular virus. It's a compliment and she will happily tell you how amazing they are, even though some of them can kill you. And then she'll laugh and you can't help but laugh along with her.

"Her glass work is just a joy. Her current work has layers of color and shapes that you can look at all day and still find a lovely surprise that you hadn't noticed before," Nadeau added. "It has beautiful colors, it is complex but not overwhelming and it makes you happy to be around it, very much like Carol herself."

Courtesy photo

**Artist Carolyn "Carol" Teschke enjoys working in bright colors.**

Teschke has a studio in a barn in her backyard where she creates, usually on weekends. She finds that she focuses on one medium at a time.

"One of the things I realized recently is I have a hard time mixing them. I'm either doing glass or jewelry. That's probably how my brain is wired. I work for a couple of hours, then my husband will call me in for lunch. If my schedule allows it, I spend nearly all of my weekend at the barn, away from asking questions, with my radio on, happily making things; it's my happy place," she said.

That's what she's hoping that others experience with her work.

"Especially with the glass work, I want them to feel happy," she said. "I try to make them joyful by using pretty colors, by using pretty patterns. That's what I'm going for with my glass." **GL**

*The Wesleyan Potters 62nd Annual Sale runs from November 24 through December 10; admission is free. Learn more at wesleyanpotters.com.*


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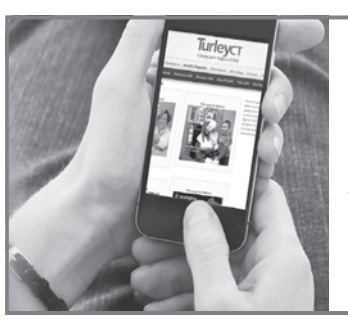

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**MANCHESTER** **$249,900**
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# LIFE *in the kitchen*

## *with chef Dnaiel Stevens*

**by Nancy Thompson**
*Editor*

Some people discover their life's work in their 20s or later. Daniel Stevens, head chef at South Glastonbury's Sayulita, knew when he was working as a dishwasher at 15.

"I saw the guy in charge and thought, 'Wow! Look at this guy. He's in charge of the kitchen.' It looked like a cool job. It was instantaneous."

He worked as a cook and prep cook at Jetstreams Café on Route 44 in Avon all through high school to hone his skills and be sure it was the career for him.

"Yep. This was it," he recalled thinking.

He moved to Arizona, where he had a friend at Arizona State University, and enrolled in the Scottsdale Culinary Institute. It was in there, the Southwest, that he developed his passion for the kind of food he creates at Sayulita.

"I worked in a number of Southwest and Mexican restaurants," he said. I loved the ingredients, and chilies and the rest. I worked for a lot of great chefs."

He did an internship at a restaurant called Z Tejas – "Tejas" means "Texas" – and stayed there for 15 years.

"I was exposed to a lot of talented chefs who took me under their wing," he said.

He opened a new restaurant for the company, this one in Southern California, and stayed there for 14 years. He had more responsibility and developed a lot of menu items.

About three years ago he met Bill Driggs through a mutual friend. Driggs, who owns 2hopewell Bistro in South Glastonbury, was about to open Sayulita a half mile or so to the south and hired Stevens as his

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assistant chef at the new restaurant.

"I'm glad I ran into him," Stevens said. "It was a way to come to the state, work with the food I love, and make an impact." When Van Hurd, Sayulita's first executive chef, left, Driggs invited Stevens to move up.

He said that while the menu includes several staples, it changes often. "I've flipped the menu three or four times since taking over," he said. "It's exciting. There's so much we haven't done. We haven't even scratched the surface."

Sayulita, popular from the start, continues to draw crowds daily.

"The growth is exciting, but it's stressful," Stevens said. "It's a lot of hard work but we're getting good results and a lot of pats on the back, so it's good."

He said he likes working for Driggs because he's willing to help his chefs succeed.

"He will give you what you need, including the best ingredients, to be successful," he said.

For Stevens, the best part of the job is seeing the results they're getting. "Our hard work is paying off," he said.

The most challenging part? "Not seeing a lot of my family, not being part of story time. That's just the way it is in this business. You have to 100 percent enjoy it because there are lots of sacrifices. **GL**

*Sayulita is at 865 Main Street, South Glastonbury. The phone is 860-430-9941, and the website is cantina-sayulita.com.*

## 10 questions for Daniel Stevens

***1. What's your "secret weapon" ingredient?***
Ancho powder. It fits the mold of what we do around here.

***2. What's your least favorite food?***
Milk, butter, cream … I'm not a dairy person.

***3. What is the one cooking technique everyone should know how to do?***
Sear. It's a simple thing, but people don't know how to do it.

***4. If you could take any celebrity chef out to dinner, who would it be and where would you take them?***
Bobby Flay is one of my favorites. I'd take him to one of his own restaurants and talk about what he's done.

***5. What is your favorite cookbook of all time?***
Bobby Flay's Boy Meets Grill.

***6. If you weren't a chef, what profession would you be?***
A radio broadcaster. Talk radio, no political stuff, and I'd be home at noon.

***7. What spice or herb best describes your personality?***
Dried chilies. We put them in everything. They have a spicy, bold, earthy flavor.

***8. What's your "go to" staple/recipe/dish?***
Tacos. It's really what drives people in here.

***9. What do you like to cook when having guests to your home?***
I typically don't like to cook at home. When we do, we grill, just straight-up food.

***10. It's your last meal on earth. What's on your plate?***
Fried chicken. No doubt about it.

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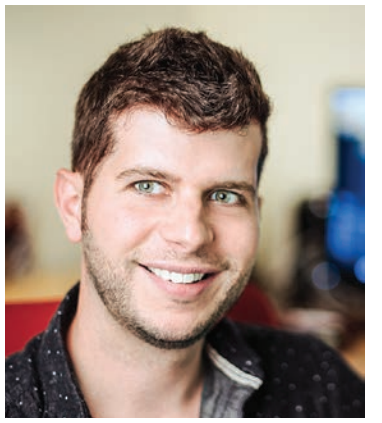
# Business Notes

**Bicycles East** has been named one of America's best bike shops by the National Bicycle Dealers Association, as well as a special honor for being a winner for five consecutive years. Bicycle East, owned by town residents Steve and Deb Dauphinais, is at 331 New London Turnpike. They can be reached at 860-659-0114, info@BicyclesEast.com, or BicyclesEast.com.

**GoodWorks Insurance** has given a $5,000 grant to reSET, a Hartford nonprofit that helps New England entrepreneurs with environmental or social missions. The insurance company donates half its profits through its community grants program.

Joseph Palys



Mathew Greenfeld

Lauren Kelly

Barbara Caruso

**Cronin**, a digitally driving marketing agency, has hired four new employees.

**Barbara Caruso** is a digital project manager in the company's technology and innovation team; **Mathew Greenfeld** is a videographer on the agency's creative team; **Lauren Kelly** is an associate brand manager on the brand management team; and **Joseph Palys** is an estimator on the agency's finance team. **GL**

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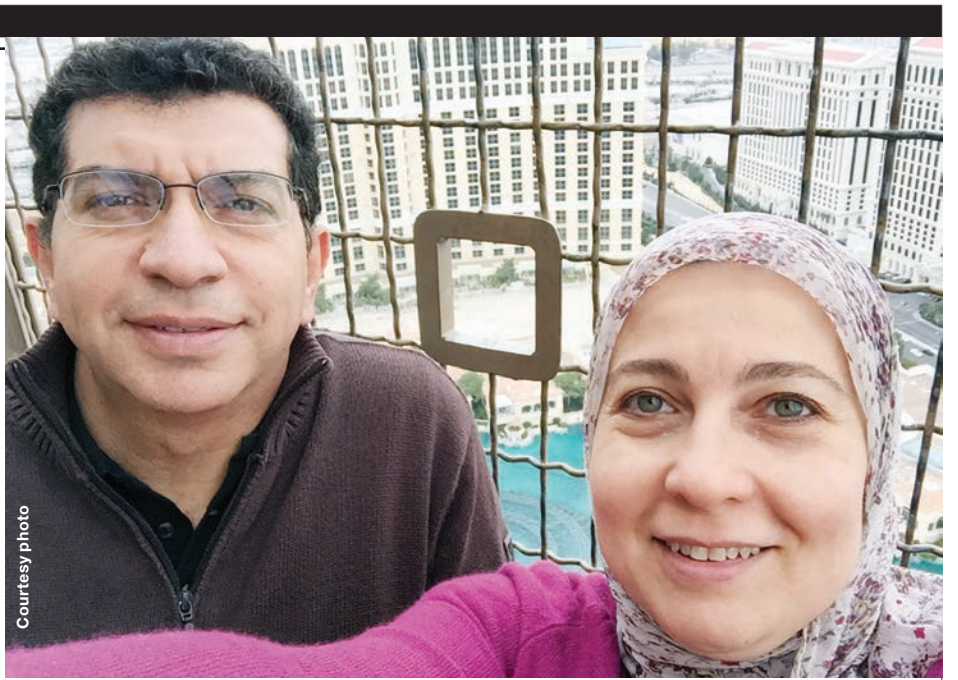
# ‘Somebody up above was planning for us’

## Egyptian couple comes to study at UConn and forges a new life in Connecticut

**by Mara Dresner**
*Staff Writer*


Courtesy photo

**Ahmed Eldirany and Amal Abd El-Raouf came to Connecticut from Egypt when Abd El-Raouf was studying for her doctorate.**

There’s a saying that man plans and God laughs. But sometimes God has a plan that’s far beyond what we could have ever envisioned. Just ask Ahmed Eldirany and Amal Abd El-Raouf.

The couple grew up in Egypt, where they met as opponents at a school competition.

“We met in a competition for top students in high school. After that, it happened that we went to the same college for five years. I believe that Ahmed and I are soulmates, so it was natural to pair up over time,” Abd El-Raouf said. “Life in Egypt was great. I grew up in a wonderful family with caring parents and kind siblings. I made it to the engineering department of Cairo University, one of the top schools in Egypt.”

Eldirany earned a degree in architecture.

“After graduation we got married. It was not really an arranged marriage because we were classmates, so we arranged it ourselves but with our parents’ approval,” he said.

After being married in Cairo, the couple set about their life together in Egypt.

Eldirany started a business focused on environmentally friendly architecture, producing clay bricks that would stay cool in the summer and warm in the winter.

“I worked in this business for three years with a partner. We did really very well. We even built machinery that would build that brick,” said Eldirany, who also studied in Germany.

Then Abd El-Raouf got a scholarship to come to the University of Connecticut.

“I never thought that I would leave Egypt someday to live in another country and call it home,” she said. “I used to work in a research institute in Egypt where I met many American

Courtesy photo

**Ahmed Eldirany and Amal Abd El-Raouf pose with their sons Sherif and Mohamed. The family moved to Glastonbury in 2010 because it is a convenient spot between Eldirany's business in South Windsor and Abd El-Raouf's teaching position at Southern Connecticut State University.**

professors of Egyptian origin who encouraged me to come to the states to get my Ph.D. degree. A UConn professor, who later became my advisor, really loves Connecticut and described it to be the best place to raise your kids so that was it and I loved it too. Computer science and engineering was my dream; it is both interesting and challenging. There is a myth that this field is only for men which is why I rolled up my sleeves and faced the challenge."

The decision to come to Connecticut was complicated for the young family.

"At that time, I have a business growing. We had contracts from private entities, the government. We had two boys as well who were 4 and 6 at that time. We had to make a decision. She's getting a scholarship from UConn, a full scholarship. On the other hand, I have my business I'm starting to grow," Eldirany said.

For the first year, 2000, he went back and forth between Connecticut and Egypt. Their sons had a big adjustment to the new environment.

"Sherif went to first grade in Willimantic. He had some background in English but not really that much; he knew some words. Amazingly in three weeks, he caught English and got really to be a pro in it," Eldirany said. "Mohamed had a hard time because he really did not have any background in English. He was really attached to his grandparents [in Egypt], and for the first year, it was really tough for him to get the language."

Abd El-Raouf was immediately taken with the Nutmeg State.

"I loved it as it is beautiful, quiet and safe for families. I found that people were friendly and welcoming to newcomers like me," she said.

While the plan was for Abd El-Raouf to complete her degree and then for the family to move back to Egypt, Eldirany soon came across the United States Agency for International Development, which offered a unique educational opportunity.

"It was aid provided to Middle East executives in my age [group] to improve their managerial skills. So 1,500 applicants applied and 40 were pre-selected, and then 20 were finally selected and I was one of them. USAID required us to apply to five different universities. I applied to Columbia; I applied to Ohio; I applied for Connecticut; I applied for Worcester; and I applied for San Diego," he said.

Scholarship recipients were required to accept offers based on both the school's ranking and which school offers acceptance first. So, if a student hasn't accepted an offer and a higher ranking school then makes an offer, the student is required to take it. Eldirany was first accepted by San Diego and Worcester Polytechnic Institute and rejected by Ohio.

"Then UConn gave me acceptance and I jumped on it and accepted the offer. The next day, Columbia sent me approval," he said.

Amazingly, that meant he and his wife would be studying in the same location.

"I had to make more arrangements back home for my company. I was now a family man coming and a businessman leaving a business behind, being a full-time student. The last time I was a full-time student [had been] for my last MBA in 1994. It was seven years after. It wasn't easy studying everything in English. Luckily, I had good professors and good classmates," he said.

He was in his first week of classes, a 10 a.m. statistics class with Professor Robert Garnfinkel, when the class was interrupted with the news that a plane had flown into the World Trade Center.

"It was one of the worst days of my life. I didn't understand what he was talking about in the beginning. A classmate went online and while we were talking, the second plane hit," he remembered.

It was a bewildering time.

"You have to imagine now I was someone coming from the Middle East, someone having the same religion as those hijackers and those terrorists, thinking what will happen next. My wife wears a hijab. No one knows who I am. I could be Indian; I could be Brazilian. Luckily, we live in Storrs, where they're more open to other people, open to what can happen; they're more forgiving, really supporting, but everything changed that day," he said. "Just before this, we would go to a tag sale. People would ask, 'Where are you from?' They'd say, 'Come in. Take this, take that. Bring everybody here.' That was September 8. September 11, I'd go to the supermarket and see people, they don't even want to talk to you. When I'd be with my wife, they don't even want to talk to you. The UConn community was really, really supportive. They came up with t-shirts. Everybody [wore] a hijab for one day, just to support us. It was tough but at same time, we saw the values and good hearts that surround us here."

Abd El-Raouf – whose first name, Amal, means "hope" in English – said it was the "worst time ever."

"It was a turning point at which my hijab instead of showing faith was a trigger to Islamophobic remarks. I spent a couple of weeks at home and Ahmed used to go shopping and drive the kids everywhere," she said.

Still, she was grateful for the support of the UConn community.

"I was lucky to be at UConn during this difficult time," she said.

When Eldirany finished his degree program in two years with a 4.05 average in June 2003, he had a decision to make. His wife was still studying and the family had two children.

"She still has another at least two years to finish her degree Ph.D. and maybe another one year of training. The easiest way was to find any job or go back and forth to Egypt. After graduation, you have to have either have some kind of [additional] training or find a job. Being who I am with my name, Ahmed, it was very hard to find a job. I didn't want to waste time trying to find job that wouldn't come," he said. "September 11 was one of the reasons I started this business. This is why I started a business here. Starting a business at that time was an adventure. At the same time, we were thinking, 'Let's see what happens. If it succeeds, good. If not, I have another decision to make.'"

In April 2004 he and a partner started a distributor business geared toward contractors. They soon decided they had gone down the wrong path.

"In just four months, we decided that distribution is not the right business to be in. There are lot of barriers to stop us from penetrating the market. At the time I had a partner. Both of us had some skills that could get us get into design and fabrication," Eldirany explained. "The first vanity we installed, you had an architect with an MBA degree and an engineer who has another MBA degree. We

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jumped in a pickup truck; it was snowing. It was a small vanity. We had no experience but with a lot of determination we were going to succeed."

Getting into fabrication was the right choice.

"It was the best decision. After only six months, we broke even. After another six months, we made some good profit and the company started to be a success. But let me tell you, this did not come easy. I used to work more than 16 hours a day. I had sore arms, a sore back, we did everything ourselves. If you work hard and have a vision, the sky's the limit. That's the beauty of this country," he said.

After seven years the two partners, who by that time had 10 employees, split on amicable terms, with Eldirany selling his shares in the company.

He then started his current business, Granite & Kitchen Studio LLC, in South Windsor, and does cabinets, counters and design work.

Although Eldirany was busy with his company when Abd El-Raouf finished her degree in 2005, he said all options were on the table.

"When she finished her degree, now it's her turn to make a decision, to continue here or go back to Egypt," he said. "We designed a matrix that clearly [showed] that we want to stay for the benefit for the whole family, mainly for the boys, the educational system will benefit them the most. We could be a very useful part of this community. The economy and social and everything else, everything has a weight. The boys' education has the highest weight for us."

And while it sounds completely clinical, Eldirany admits it wasn't.

"If our heart doesn't go with the numbers, we would go back and change them," he said with a laugh.

They knew they'd made the right decision – to stay in Connecticut – when Abd El-Raouf was immediately able to find a job in the state, getting the first job she applied for.

"I got my Ph.D. degree from UConn in 2005 and started my career as assistant professor in computer science at Southern Connecticut State University the same year. Over the years I enjoyed being an educator to the young generation and a researcher who contributes to the field. I love my students the same way I love my kids. My most rewarding moments have been seeing my students succeed and excel in the field," said Abd El-Raouf, who now is a professor in the computer science department at the university.

They lived in Cromwell for several years before moving to Glastonbury in 2010, which Eldirany said was "an easy decision."

"There are nice people, a good education, it's safe; the boys were happy being there, especially Mohamed," he said.

Today, Mohamed is a senior at Princeton University and Sherif is in medical school at Yale University.

While Eldirany and Abd El-Raouf miss their family in Egypt, they are feel blessed with how their lives have turned out.

"I found Connecticut to be a great place for my kids to grow up, which was my number one priority. I also became part of a community and built my professional career in this state," Abd El-Raouf said. "I am blessed to have all the wonderful people around me. They fill my life with joy, sunshine and love; my husband, mom, siblings, friends, colleagues and mostly my two amazing sons … who always make me a very proud mom."

Eldirany said their story shows how life can take unexpected turns.

**"I found Connecticut to be a great place for my kids to grow up, which was my number one priority. I also became part of a community and built my professional career in this state."**

**-Abd El-Raouf**

"Yes, we planned for things but things change based on the actual environment you live in. The plan was to come in, take a good education and go back home. I was willing to go back and forth, and then we'd go back home. Then I got a scholarship. It was a plan from God. Then we thought I'd finish my education and go back home then," he said. "Somebody up above was planning for us. It was an easy decision to stay. The plan is not ours. You do your best. You work hard and hope for the best." GL


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# A place for all seasons

## Park has something for everyone, every day

**by Nancy Thompson**
*Editor*

***Question:** Where in town can visitors hike, watch birds, ride horses, walk dogs, take photographs, peep at leaves, learn about the environment with experts, run around with cross-country skis and snowshoes, take a dip in the chilly Connecticut River and even play "Poohsticks"?*

***Answer:** Earle Park, the almost-50-acre preserve with a pond, a brook, fields and hills, all accessible on well-marked, if occasionally steep, trails and open to the public.*

The town-owned property, named for long-time physician B. Baylis Earle and his family, its previous owners, stretches from the Connecticut Audubon Center at Glastonbury to the Connecticut River. It's connected by a publicly accessible pathway to the historic Cider Mill property to the south and to the Red Hill open space area west of Riverview Road.

Michelle Eckman, interim director of the local Audubon center and an expert in ecology and conservation, took us on a tour of the park on a glorious fall day, pointing out frogs and turtles at Tom's Pond, where she explained that the water level is low because of droughts for the past several years.

"This is our classroom for climate, geology and adaptation," she said of the area, adding that the park has many habitats, including wetlands, woodlands, fields, and the Connecticut River.

We heard birds, which she identified as "tiny, feisty" ruby-crowned kinglets on their way south from Canada on their annual southern migration, and later crossed Holland Brook twice on bridges made by Eagle Scout candidates as part of their work toward earning the award.

Oh, yes, and anyone who isn't familiar with the game of Poohsticks can learn all about it in "The House at Pooh Corner" by A.A. Milne. **GL**

*Thank you to Michelle Eckman for her tour and her expertise as we explored Earle Park.*

**1. This bridge over Holland Brook was designed and built as part of an Eagle Scout project. It's perfect for a game of Poohsticks.**

**2. Earle Park is popular with bird-watchers, who enjoy seeing the birds that created these holes in the trunk of a dead tree.**

**3. Earle Park offers stunning views of the Connecticut River, and brave folks can take a chilly dip in the summer.**

**4. Earle Park is a popular spot for horse-riders, who use many of the trails and can jump over these tires and a nearby wall.**

# News roundup

## Election Day coming up

Elections for several local offices will take place November 7. Also on the ballot is a referendum that will determine whether the town will add $3 million to the land development and acquisitions fund.

The referendum question reads: "Shall the Town of Glastonbury appropriate $3,000,000 for purchase of development rights and acquisition of land pursuant to ordinance establishing the town's reserve for land acquisition and authorize the issue of bonds and notes in the same amount to finance said appropriation?" A "yes" vote approves the question, and a "no" vote opposes it.

Polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. in the following voting districts:

**1: Smith Middle School,**
216 Addison Rd.

**2 and 3: Hebron Avenue School,**
1363 Hebron Ave.

**4: Gideon Welles School,**
1029 Neipsic Rd.

**5: Nayaug Elementary School,**
222 Old Maids Lane,
South Glastonbury

**7: Academy Building,**
2143 Main St.

**9: Hopewell Elementary School,**
1068 Chestnut Hill Rd.,
South Glastonbury.

**There is no District 6 or 8.**

For details or to check your polling place, call the registrars of voters at 860-652-7627 or 860-652-7628 or visit the town website and go to the link for departments and then for registrars of voters.

## New life for Eastbury

Eastbury Elementary School will be closing at the end of the school year. What's next for the building on Neipsic Road?

The board of education has decided that it will house the LINKS Academy, including post-graduate students, as well as the district's preschool program and the offices for the pupil services and special education offices.

School officials said they believe that centralizing the programs and providing room for expansion will offer several educational and financial benefits.

Board members are expected to continue to talk about the use of the Eastbury building over the course of the year.

## One down, one to go

With completion of the roundabout at the intersection of Hebron Avenue and New London Turnpike, town officials and business owners are looking ahead to the construction next year of a roundabout at the intersection of Hebron Avenue and House Street.

(Nancy Thompson photo)

**Hebron Avenue and New London Turnpike roundabout**

At a recent meeting organized by the CT River Valley Chamber of Commerce, business owners asked town several questions, including the length of time the first project took, the possibility of tax waivers for businesses near the work and how communications from the town might be improved for the second project.

They learned that work on the first roundabout took longer than expected in part because undocumented utilities were discovered underground. They were told that state laws prohibit tax waivers but suggested they talk with the local assessor about reducing the assessment of their property while the project is underway.

They also learned that although the terms are often used interchangeably, a "roundabout" is not a "rotary". The purpose of a roundabout is to lower speeds and provide walkways for pedestrians. By contrast, roundabouts have a larger footprint and allow motorists to travel at higher speeds.

Business owners and residents can learn about the projects online at Glastonbury-ct.gov/roundabout or the town's Facebook page. Updates also are emailed to everyone who signs up at Glastonbury-ct.gov/enotify. **GL**

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Lacy is an 8-year-old Labrador retriever/German shepherd mix. She is a survivor of the hurricane that battered Houston, Texas, and is hoping to find a new home in Connecticut. Lacy would do best in a single-family home or condominium and any children should be 12 or older. She needs to be the only dog in the house and has plenty of energy. She enjoys walking but needs to be on a leash.

Skippy is a special kind of guy, also 8 years old. A Chihuahua mix, he can adapt to just about any type of residence. He's got plenty of love and energy and needs daily exercise. Skippy wants nothing to do with any other dogs but might be willing to share his new home with a cat. He's best suited for a family with children who are 15 or older.

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# ‘A true gentleman who is always willing to lend a hand or an ear’

## Dave Megaw is rooted in community involvement

**by Mara Dresner**
*Staff Writer*

Dave Megaw always wanted to be an architect but there was one problem: He’s color-blind. Instead he pursued a career as a lawyer, attending law school at the University of Connecticut.

“I enlisted in the Army after law school in 1969. After basic and advanced infantry training at Fort Dix and Fort Polk, I reported to Fort Benning for officer candidate school. With a cutback in the need for offi-

Courtesy photo

**Dave Megaw is involved with many organizations including the Glastonbury Education Foundation.**


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cers, my class was offered an option to pick alternative service. I asked for an assignment in Germany. They sent me to Schofield Barracks in Hawaii. I had passed the Connecticut bar exam. They needed an attorney. I handled all civil legal issues in the JAG office," said Megaw, who served as a legal assistance officer dealing with wills, domestic relations and consumer credit issues. "It was the best assignment I could have asked for. I had been a lifeguard and swim coach in college so an assignment in Hawaii was very special."

While in Hawaii he also met his future wife.

"I met Hilda, who was from Texas, at a dance. She was an elementary school teacher on Oahu for three years before moving with me to Glastonbury. I grew up in the Northeast. Hilda's introduction to driving in the snow coming from west Texas and Hawaii was quite an adjustment," he said.

Megaw enjoyed his career as a tax attorney.

"My job was basically – and this is oversimplifying it – to be an adviser to the advisers. My clientele were financial planners. I managed a staff of attorneys in the insurance industry who provided technical and marketing support to those financial planners," he said.

He enjoyed the variety of the work.

"Every year, Congress changed the rules. I did a lot of public speaking, and it was a national practice so I was traveling around the country," he said.

He also edited a weekly tax newsletter for 22 years, as well as serving as the volunteer president of a credit union.

Megaw wrote a number of books, most related to the insurance industry.

Working for Longman Publishing, he wrote about the Tax Reform Act of 1986, one of his best-known books.

"What we're talking about now, when we talk about the first tax change in a generation is referring to that tax act," he said. "I wrote the B. Dalton best seller on that. It was a quick reference guide to the '86 tax act. That was a concentrated effort. [Today,] if you're trying to write something related to this kind of stuff, you're probably working for one of the big accounting houses and you probably have a whole team of people. I was following the legislation so closely, by the time it was enacted into law, my copy was done. It was written for a layman. What I liked to do was take the complex and simplify it so it would be something people could relate to."

Through the years Megaw has been involved in a number of community ventures, including serving for about 15 years in various positions in Glastonbury's town government, where he was on the town council and on the public building commission.

**"One of the biggest things we did during my time in town council was we acquired the riverfront property which was an old tobacco field."**

**– Dave Megaw**


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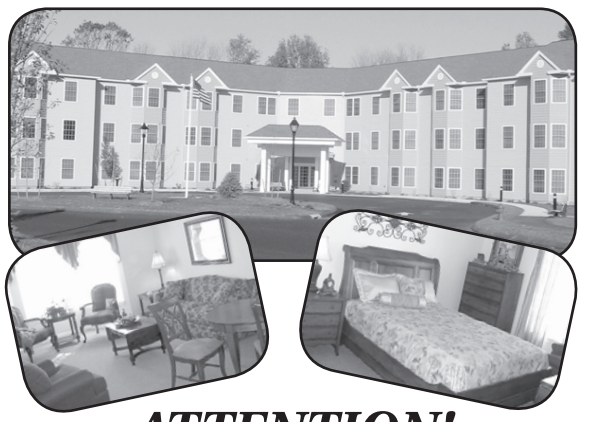

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"It was a very busy time for our town in that 15-year period. We were growing; our infrastructure needed to be brought up to date. One of the biggest things we did during my time in town council was we acquired the riverfront property which was an old tobacco field. It was unused when we purchased that and now it's the wonderful Riverfront Park," said Megaw, who retired about nine years ago.

As chairman of the public buildings commission, he had the chance to put his interest in architecture to good use.

"I got to be involved in hiring architects and approving their designs. I was one of many people involved with helping put together schools, the library, the ambulance facility, firehouses, the renovations of public buildings, so that was a lot of fun," he said.

**"My wife teacher taught all 12 grade levels. She was one of the few teachers to do that, and she did that on purpose."**

**– Dave Megaw**

He's been actively involved with the Exchange Club of Glastonbury, which gives out scholarships and funding, as well as working toward preventing child abuse. Locally, the group is known for its annual antique show, a golf tournament that supports the ABC House, a bowl-a-thon that benefits KIDSAFE CT and the popular Touch-A-Truck fundraiser.

Megaw is also a graduate of the Third Age Initiative of Leadership Greater Hartford, which enables older/retirement-aged people to have the opportunity to channel their experience in ways to give back to the community.

"When you agree to join the class, you initially meet weekly and you commit to a year of service, if you will. The classes are roughly 25 to 30 people. You go through a wonderful experience with trips around city. You visit homeless shelters, food banks, some of the schools within the Hartford system, all designed to make the city a better place. Then you go on a weekend retreat. Ultimately, you have to decide what am I going to work on and who am I doing to work with? And then they let you loose and you go do it. That is a real challenge. Everyone has a different opinion. You have no budget to speak of," said Megaw, who participated in the program in 2010.

His project, which he enjoyed photographing, was to work with fifth and sixth graders at a school in Hartford.

"Our goal was to introduce a group of students that teachers help us pull together to think past high school. What we did was coordinate that group of students and put together a program to take them to Trinity, to see what it like go through admissions, to eat there, to see the facilities. We also took them to Goodwin College, which was a whole different educational experience. We worked with one of the deans over at Goodwin and got a full day there," he said. "One

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of best thing we heard was students saying, 'I want to go here.' Some of them lived right down the street from Trinity and had never been there before."

Educational projects have always been important to Megaw.

"I'm the oldest of seven children, with six of us who are surviving, and all of us have multiple graduate degrees. Education has always been big in our lives," he said.

It was also important to his late wife, who taught in Glastonbury for about 24 years in addition to teaching in Hawaii.

"My wife teacher taught all 12 grade levels. She was one of the few teachers to do that, and she did that on purpose. She wanted to know where they were coming from in terms of curriculum that they'd had and she wanted to know where they were going," he said.

That's why his involvement with the Glastonbury Education Foundation is so special to him. He's been involved from its inception, first serving as a board member and now serving in an advisory capacity. The all-volunteer group of community members was formed in 1998 and incorporated as a 501(c)3 tax-exempt, non-profit public charity in 2003. The Foundation fundraises for a variety of community-based education programs, projects and initiatives, and has funded everything from a TV studio to a greenhouse to a robotics center.

"We have a very efficient ability to do some neat things, not just for the schools but for the whole town. For example, we brought in Doris Kearns Goodwin to talk about leadership," Megaw noted.

The foundation raises funds with two major events, a gala the last Friday before Thanksgiving and a 5K race in May that usually draws more than 500 participants.

"Dave and I serve on the Glastonbury Education Foundation board. Dave was one of the founding members of the foundation. He is an advisor and as chair I rely on him frequently for advice and counsel. Quite simply, I always feel better when Dave is in the room. He gives level-headed, rock solid advice. His background and knowledge come in handy but even more than that he is a kind, generous person. He is always the first to buy his gala table and help with recruiting new board members. He is a true gentleman who is always willing to lend a hand or an ear," Holly Howley said.

In addition to his community work, Megaw also keeps busy with his six grandchildren, four locally and two in New Jersey. He's been enjoying updating his home, drawing on his interest in architecture and design.

A competitive sailor who enjoys tennis, Megaw is no homebody.

"I love to travel," he noted, "and took a wonderful trip last fall to Italy – the Amalfi coast and Sicily with a group of 18 from Glastonbury." **GL**

*The Glastonbury Education Foundation's annual gala will be held November 17. Learn more at glastonburyeducationfoundation.org.*

# Discovering what lies ahead

## Student Voices

**by Sean Humphrey**
*GHS Class of 2018*

Courtesy photo

While school was at a halt during the course of the summer, the question of what might lie ahead after junior year lingered in my mind with college in range, and the title of the top of the upperclassmen of high school in reach. Despite only being a senior for a short period of time, however, I have already been given a strong overview on what to expect for the year to come, and needless to say the trail to graduation looks well worth the hike.

Current Issues, a senior-exclusive history class, introduces a style of teaching with the classroom being the entire class of 2018. Although unique among all other schools in the nation, this subject may be quite familiar to previous Glastonbury High School students. Using college-type lectures on modern topics, we stay in tune with the news and analyze it to fully understand the affairs of the United States, foreign and domestic, and the world itself. Politics of late has become a hot topic for discussion among citizens of all ages, which makes it all the more interesting, especially for me, as a frequent reader, viewer, and student writer of the news. On the side, the

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## Student Voices

class is also used as a way to inform seniors on the latest school events with announcements and exclusive updates for seniors. My classmates and I attended a useful lecture on college planning, with a guideline given to show exactly what to expect in the upcoming months, including the deadline for applications, which to my surprise is not too far away. Over the past year, I have slowly begun the process of searching for colleges in the Northeast, forming a plan for after high school, and based on the timeline, it appears from the beginning of the year to the beginning of December is the time to narrow down on where I want to go.

Another great senior feature, and perhaps the most interesting science class I have taken yet over the span of high school, is Forensic Science. The class goes further into detail about everything that's needed to know about investigations of crime scenes, whether it be fingerprint analysis or assuming the role of the jury in true real-life criminal cases (helping to determine if a suspect is guilty or not guilty), and intriguingly enough how it ties with various other subjects of study, including the medical field. Science hasn't always been my key subject, but the way it integrates elements with a full look at the role of detectives and police investigators definitely pulls on my interest. I have just one question: where has this class been for the past four years?

Aside from classes only for seniors, my current year schedule is composed of a mix of mandatory classes including Modern Literature and a gym class that consists of personalized workouts titled Body Dynamics mixed in with art electives of the likes of Video Art and Design. Senior year is a great time to focus on the classes that serve your academic needs along with your own interests, and I believe my schedule has been molded to personally demonstrate both. Outside of a regular day of school, I also take part in one of the many extracurricular activities offered by the school, participating in the Newspaper Club as staff writer and editor. Proudly writing for the Hawks' Eye since freshman year has provided me great experience as a journalist, and perhaps helped shape the path of my field of study.

Although still very new to being a senior, the year ahead looks great so far and perhaps succeeded my own expectations. I look forward to what's to come as the class of 2018 progresses through their final year of high school, preparing for what's next and using the exciting opportunities that Glastonbury High School has provided to their advantage.

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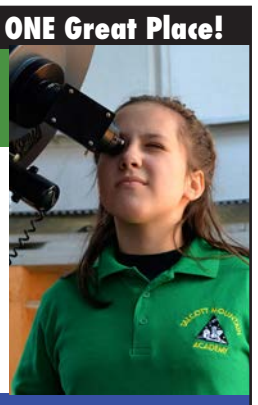

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# Get Ready for 'A Christmas Carol'

## Student Voices

by Lizzie Collins

Hitting the Glastonbury High School stage in November is Glastonbury High School Drama Club's next extraordinary production: the holiday classic, A Christmas Carol. Directed by Mr. Jeremy Gervais, the play is set to open November 10 and will continue to run the November 11, 17 and 18, all at 7 p.m. in the GHS auditorium. For now though, the cast is hard at work rehearsing and perfecting the show before opening night.

Written by Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol chronicles the life of old Ebenezer Scrooge, played by junior Luke Danko. Scrooge is a stingy miser who is also the employer of overworked and underpaid Bob Cratchit – played by senior Adam Pisarski – a kind-hearted man with a family of seven. Scrooge hates Christmas and shows it by refusing to donate to charity and yelling at his nephew Fred, played by junior Dan Gorman, when Fred is too spirited. He is, however, kind enough to at least give Cratchit Christmas Day off. When Scrooge returns home that night, he's confronted by the ghost of his former business partner, Jacob Marley, played by junior Max Korman. Marley is burdened by chains of greed and selfishness, and threatens Scrooge with the same fate unless Scrooge listens to three spirits that will come to visit him: Christmas Past, Present, and Yet to Come, played by Megan Aloise, Mordecai Jadlos, and Ryan Pisarski, respectively. The play features both old-fashioned language and British accents, elements the drama club has already worked with in Julius Caesar and Noises Off, but will nevertheless present a challenge.

The play also brings in a few elements new to drama club. For example, Tiny Tim, now Tiny Tina, will not be played by a high school student, but instead by fifth-grader Leslie Borsotti. Leslie's sister, senior Julie Borsotti, has had a handful of lead roles drama club shows, including Marta von Trapp in The Sound of Music, Little Red Riding Hood in Into the Woods, and Diana in Lend Me a Tenor. It's clear that Leslie will be following her sister's path in school theater, and it will surely be interesting to see how she will perform and work with students much older than her.

Though A Christmas Carol isn't a comedy like the club's 2016 hit Lend Me a Tenor, it's not as dark as Into the Woods or Julius Caesar. A Christmas Carol has many lessons to teach, and is a perfect holiday production for audiences of all ages; it will certainly be worth two hours of your time and support towards Drama Club this November. Tickets will be available online October 23 at showtix4u.com or at the door. GL

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# November Events

**Effective Resume Writing.** 11/1 and 11/15, 12:30 p.m., SSC L107. Improve your visibility in the job market by learning the skills and strategies needed to develop a resume that gets positive response from employers. Info: Julie Greene at 860-512-3372 or email jgreene@manchestercc.edu.

**Connecticut Poetry Circuit - Poetry Reading: Safia Elhillo.** 11/1, 7 p.m., GPA Community Commons. Poet Safia Elhillo, Sudanese by way of Washington, D.C., is a Pushcart Prize nominee, co-winner of the 2015 Brunel University African Poetry Prize and winner of the 2016 Sillerman First Book Prize for African Poets. Info: Jeanine DeRusha at 860-512-2670 or email jderusha@manchestercc.edu.

**The Common Read Presents Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*.** Info: Andrew Sottile at 860-512-2668 or email asottile@manchestercc.edu.

**Discussions**

**Chapters 5-8.** 11/8, 2 p.m. and 4 p.m., GPA Community Commons. Join Lisa Sandoval of MCC's English department for a discussion of the middle four chapters.

**Chapters 9-12.** 11/29, 7 p.m., 11/30, 4 p.m., GPA Community Commons. Join Andrew Sottile, instructor of English, for a discussion of the last four chapters.

Bring your books! Snacks and refreshments will be provided.

**Film Screening and Discussion.** 11/16, 12:30 p.m., SBM Charitable Foundation Auditorium. Robert Brandt, of MCC's film and communication faculty, will host a post-screening discussion.

**Interviewing Tips.** 11/8 and 11/29, 12:30 p.m., SSC L107. Job seekers will gain insight into frequently asked interview questions and other tips that can help lead to a successful interview. Info: Julie Greene at 860-512-3372 or email jgreene@manchestercc.edu.

**Campus Visits.** SSC Atrium. Regional representatives will be on campus to discuss transfer opportunities. Info: Stephanie Swantek at 860-512-3306 or email sswantek@manchestercc.edu.

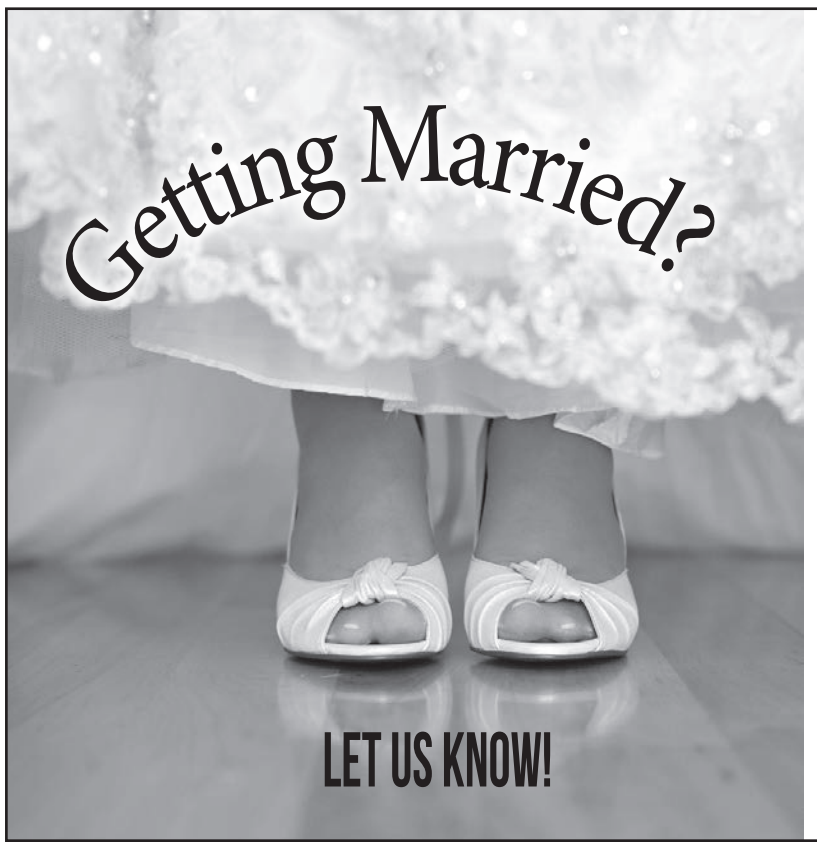
**Central Connecticut State University.** 11/9, 10 a.m.
**Bay Path University.** 11/13, 10 a.m.
**University of Bridgeport.** 11/15, 10 a.m.
**Western New England University.** 11/16, 10 a.m.
**American International College.** 11/16, 10 a.m.; 11/29, 3 p.m.

**Open House.** 11/9, 4:30 p.m., GPA Community Commons. The Open House will provide information on over 80 certificates and degree programs offered at MCC as well on financial aid, admissions and other programs catered to the adult learner. Pre-registration suggested at www.manchestercc.edu/openhouse.

**31st Annual Alumni Dinner and Awards Night.** 11/14, 6 p.m., SSC Culinary Arts Center. Alumni, students and their guests are invited to mingle with fellow alumni at 6 p.m. during the wine and hors d'oeuvres reception, followed by dinner at 6:45 p.m. End the evening with dessert, coffee and presentation of the Alumnus of the Year award. Fee: $10. To register, visit www.manchestercc.edu/alumni. Info: Diana Reid at 860-512-2909 or email dreid@manchestercc.edu.

*All events are free and open to the public, unless otherwise noted, and are subject to change without notice. For current information or notices of cancellation, click on "View All Events" on MCC's web site: www.manchestercc.edu.*

*11/2017*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## Education

# Students of the Month

This month's Student of the Month is the editorial board at Naubuc Elementary School, a team of fifth-grade students that have shown an interest in reading, writing and editing. The team members include Joshua Graham, Noah Cady, Kyle Hatcher, Olivia Otto, Addison Infante, Eva Shannon and Lauren Mosca.

Board members select bi-monthly themes and genres, encourage students to participate, collect and review all poems submitted.

They select as many as 20 poems written by rising young authors for inclusion in one of the hardbound books published by school's Writer's World Publishing Center. The books are permanently displayed in the school's library and posted on the school website.

Faculty members, recognizing that poetry helps promote literacy, builds a strong community and encourages emotional resistance, work with young writers and the editorial board in what Principal Michael Litke has called "a wonderful tradition" at the school. **GL**

# START YOUR CAREER AT EASTERN!

**LaToya Smith '06**
*Communication and History Major*
*Founder/CEO, Brass City Media*

"Eastern gave me the skills I needed to adapt to this rapidly changing industry. I received a truly multimedia education through courses in television, radio and public relations. I learned how to edit video and advanced my writing skills as a copy editor on the student newspaper."

**Jonah Sanchez '15**
*Business Administration Major*

Jonah Sanchez turned his Inroads internship at United Technologies into a position in UTC's Financial Leadership Program. "Jonah was a quick learner and acclimated quickly," said Sandra Kay Mozdzanowski, head of UTC's Benefits Finance Team. "Because of his attention to detail and willingness to learn, he was given high-level projects to work on."

**Adam Wurtzel '07**
*Communication Major*

Adam Wurtzel is a promotions producer at Fox 17-TV in Nashville, and has interviewed such celebrities as Dolly Parton, Kenny Rogers and Cyndi Lauper as host, writer and producer of "The Pickup," a country music news feature carried on the Heartland Network and more than 100 radio station websites. "I literally owe everything to Eastern, where I learned the inner workings of television — tools I use every day at work."

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# Slice of LIFE

photos by Lisa Brisson

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Tens of thousands of visitors took rides on the Sizzler and Swings, gobbled down apple fritters, apple crisp, and even BBQ pork mac and cheese pizza, and played arcade games and listened to great music during the 43rd annual Apple Harvest Festival held Oct. 13-15. The annual event, which is a fall tradition for so many, is held at Riverfront Park and serves as a fundraiser for the Connecticut River Valley Chamber of Commerce. In addition to listening to music from 30 bands, visitors shopped around Vendor Village, tasted the fare offered from 20 food trucks and vendors, cooled off at the Angry Orchard Pub while others ran in the annual Angry Orchard Apple Harvest Festival 5K and Kids Fun Run.

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## Apple Harvest Fest

**1.** Minnie Mouse visits with Bill and Suzanne Dufford. **2.** Members of the Glastonbury High School Concert Chorus warm up prior to taking the stage. **3.** Cindy Li, a senior at Glastonbury High School, was one of many Key Club volunteers who helped to sell whole pies and pie slices at the chamber's pie booth. **4.** Todd and Andrea Atcherson listen to the band Fiction with their 10-month-old son Weston. **5.** Mary Ellen Dombrowski, left, president of the Connecticut River Valley Chamber of Commerce, has help from George Agnelli and Pam Crouch to keep the massive festival running smoothly. **6.** Lia Mann, 3, and her 5-year-old sister Ava have a blast on the tractor ride. **7.** The crowds wade into the entry gate at the 43rd Annual Apple Harvest Festival. **8.** Giovanni's Pizzeria's Erica Solecki shows off one of the most popular menu items for sale: a BBQ pork and mac and cheese slice of pizza. **9.** Cassie Breslin takes her 4-year-old son Andrew for a ride on the big slide. **10.** Jon Trusz of the Marlborough Congregational Church prepares more apple fritter dough to be fried. The church volunteers sold more than 14,000 fritters during the event, with proceeds going to fund a youth mission trip. **11.** Evan Glynn and Aiden Abulsorour, both 8, sell pewter ornaments of historic Glastonbury as a fundraiser for their Cub Scout Pack 241. **12.** The Marlborough Congregational Church's apple fritters were a big hit at this year's festival. **13.** The Rotary Club of Glastonbury was on hand offering a game where if you made a golf putt, you could win a pie. **14.** Kaylee Fabiani, 5, sinks her teeth into a slice of pizza. **15.** Bobby Graff, 7, gets a hand with steering his bumper car from his uncle Tom Spinella. **16.** Catherine Brown, 8, tries her hands and feet on a rock climbing wall. **17.** A large number of amusement rides were offered at this year's event, ranging from kiddie rides to thrill rides like the giant swing.

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# Jen Staskiewicz finds 'magic' in auto-immune disease

## Goes public about her vitiligo with blog

**by Mara Dresner**
*Staff Writer*

Something odd happened while in Florida on a family vacation when Jen Staskiewicz was a preteen.

"My parents noticed that my face was very tan except for the area around my eyes. I developed what I would call 'raccoon eyes.' The darker my skin turned, the more noticeable it was," Staskiewicz recalled. "Right around this same time, I was found to have a very elevated ANA (antinuclear antibody) blood level. This is indicative of the presence of autoimmune disease. While many autoimmune diseases are difficult to diagnose because symptoms can be vague and overlapping, this one was pretty cut and dry. I was diagnosed fairly quickly with vitiligo. Vitiligo is a condition where patches of skin lose color. It is thought to be an autoimmune disease because the body mistakenly kills off healthy melanocytes, pigment cells. It is not life-threatening but definitely life-altering. In my case, the most common form, it is initially found on symmetrical joints but can spread all over the body. My doctor told me that autoimmune diseases typically come in threes, so people who have vitiligo can also have other diseases, too."

Patients with vitiligo often must deal with emotional issues as well as the physical, and that was the case for Staskiewicz.

"I don't remember being overly fixated on the vitiligo when I was first diagnosed, but looking back, I can see that's when my self-esteem started to waver. My family always told me I was beautiful, and I believed them. But once the vitiligo started to spread, I was hyper-focused on trying to hold on to what made me beautiful. With every new spot, I felt like I lost a little of that beauty," she said. "For the most part I pretended that it didn't bother me and tried to cover it up as much as possible. I tried to stay out of the sun because my tanned skin just made the vitiligo stand out more. A lot of people told me they didn't notice it, but I never believed them. It really affected my self-confidence. Once I hit adulthood I think I came to terms with the fact that I had it, but deep down I still never truly felt beautiful."

She pursued a career as a teacher, a lifelong aspiration.

"I wanted to be a teacher as far back as I can remember. I have always enjoyed being around children and pride myself on my creativity so it was a natural career choice. I grew up singing and doing

**I needed to teach them to be proud of everything they are, and that beauty shouldn't be measured by what's on the outside.**
**– Jen Staskiewicz**

Jen Staskiewicz decided to go public with her vitiligo after her daughter was diagnosed.

Photo by Danielle Marie Photography

musical theater so I loved being able to use my talents in other ways. What I enjoy most about teaching is being a part of my students' growth, both as learners and as people, seeing the excitement on their faces when I open the doors to reading is priceless. I also love that when I go to work each day, no matter what is happening in the world, I have a room full of little people waiting with bright smiles to greet me," said Staskiewicz, who teaches at Hopewell School. "This is my sixth year in Glastonbury as a kindergarten teacher. I taught for several years in both South Windsor and Southington as a special education teacher and a kindergarten teacher before staying home for a few years with my twins. I was really fortunate to get a job here when the district went to full-day kindergarten, which happened to be my girls' first year in kindergarten as well. It was a milestone for us; we all started together. I grew up in Glastonbury and have lived here for most of my life. I always wanted to teach in town because it's important to me to be a part of the community. I love this town and the people here. Some of my friends at work call me 'the mayor' because I usually know someone wherever I go. I love that; it really feels like my home."

Although she was pursuing a career she loved and busy with her family, she still often tried to hide her vitiligo. But her students would often ask about it and that made her realize that perhaps she hadn't fully come to terms with the illness.

"When I started teaching, kids would ask very innocently why my skin was different colors. When the question came up, I faltered. I had a chink in my armor. And then one day, the girls asked. They were very little, and I remember

**Jen Staskiewicz poses with husband Ben, twin daughters Natalie (left) and Lauren (right), and rescued pup Winnie. Courtesy photo Jen Staskiewicz poses with husband Ben, twin daughters Natalie (left) and Lauren (right), and rescued pup Winnie.**

thinking that if I did nothing else for my girls, I needed to teach them to be proud of everything they are, and that beauty shouldn't be measured by what's on the outside. In that moment, it just came out: magic. After all, anything that doesn't make sense to a toddler can be explained that way. And my skin did change color, which was pretty magical! I don't know if I realized then that it would stick, but it did. And after a while, I realized that in that one simple word, I had changed all of it. When the girls got older, they still had questions. I answered them honestly, and I'm glad I did," she said.

Last summer, her daughter, Lauren, was diag-

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nosed with vitiligo at the age of nine.

"It was really difficult for me, but I tried to hide it. Hers started the same way as mine. For a while I passed it off as a goggle-tan from the summer, but deep down I knew it. I don't necessarily think it was hard for me because she had it; it was more about the implication that there were/are other things that would be hard for her because of it. Vitiligo was just the beginning of all of my autoimmune issues, and I didn't want her to have to go through that," Staskiewicz said. "Even before she got vitiligo, Lauren was always the one who would stare at me, rub my spots and tell me how beautiful I was. I remind her of that often. I know I have to live what I teach so there was a point when I realized I needed to accept things for what they are and learn to look at myself differently. I've learned that with acceptance, comes self-confidence, true happiness and freedom. Despite whatever challenges I face, my life is pretty amazing. I'm so thankful that I can finally see the magic in all of that."

Staskiewicz decided it was time to stop hiding and to bring her vitiligo into the open. She's dabbled with blogging through the years, writing about living with autoimmune diseases and being the mother of twins.

This time, she decided to blog about her vitiligo.

"I decided to write about this because I wanted to show Lauren that the vitiligo doesn't have to take from her what it took from me. The teenage years are approaching, and I know they are hard. I wanted both of my girls to be able to see the value in being unique and how important it is to be beautiful on the inside, to be proud of everything you are. I don't want this disease to define Lauren; I want it to empower her. I also really wanted to document how Lauren and Natalie changed things for me, so they will never forget," she said.

The blog appeared on the Today Parenting website in August and was entitled "A letter to my daughter about magic."

"After my post, I was so touched by the outpouring of support from friends, family and even strangers," she said. "People struggling with vitiligo shared their stories and thanked me for being so open. Some people from my past told me they never even knew I had vitiligo and was struggling; that their memory

Photo by Danielle Marie Photography

**Although she first exhibited symptoms when she was 12, Jen Staskiewicz tried for years to hide her vitiligo. When one of her daughters was diagnosed this past summer, she posted an open letter about the disease on Today.com.**

**"After my post, I was so touched by the outpouring of support from friends, family and even strangers"**

**– Jen Staskiewicz**

was of my smile and my kind nature. Parents of former students have reached out to tell me how inspiring I am. I cried with every message. It was really eye-opening for me."

"In addition to being my colleague, Jen is my best friend and best support at work. She is creative, thoughtful, smart, collaborative and observant. She is a consummate and loving teacher and very knowledgeable about young learners. Her coworkers, the parents and her students love her. She has a great sense of humor with a certain amount of self-deprecation. We have lots of fun. In addition, Jen is empathetic and generous to others who may be having a rough time. She never just sympathizes; she acts to do something to make things better for those in need," Jane Conter, a fellow kindergarten teacher at Hopewell School, said. "When I read her letter to her daughter, I thought, 'That's our Jen! Putting herself out there to address what she saw as a need for her kids!' It was an act as beautiful and selfless as she is."

Staskiewicz said that there are various treatments for vitiligo.

"There are a lot of different options out there to help minimize the appearance of vitiligo, but right now there is no cure. Throughout the years I have tried many treatments, including steroid creams and UV light treatment, that helped regenerate pigment in places. At one time, I had a lot of success with the light treatments, but they were very time consuming, and over time, the spots came back. Once I had the girls, it became less important to me to try to make the spots look 'better,'" she said. "It wasn't until about a year and a half ago that my doctors were finally able to get a handle on my other autoimmune issues. Ironically, my vitiligo is the worst it has ever been, but healthwise I am in the best place I have ever been."

She said that life is busy, and her family enjoys hiking, going to the beach, as well as just hanging out at home, listening to music, playing games and making s'mores.

"This past May, we adopted our first dog. She is a two-year-old Yorkie mix who we named after the clinic in Texas that we credit for saving her, Winnie. She has changed our lives. We try to include her in as many family activities as we can," Staskiewicz said.

She credits her daughters with helping her shift her thinking about vitiligo.

"Vitiligo can be devastating to those who have it. Despite the fact that it isn't life-threatening, it does increase a person's risk for sunburn, skin cancer and other complications. It's not contagious. Vitiligo can have a huge impact on a person, both socially and emotionally," she noted.

In addition to blogging about her condition, she did a photo shoot with Danielle Aube of Danielle Marie Photography in Glastonbury.

"I think Jen is an incredibly brave and inspiring woman who shared her personal struggle not only with family but with other individuals who may be dealing with similar situations. As a mother myself to see Jen share this with her daughter and show her that beauty comes from within is a lesson that every person should know," Aube said. "I loved working on this project with Jen and to see her show up for the photoshoot with zero makeup and full confidence, I knew this was one strong woman." **GL**

*Read Jen Staskiewicz's blog about her vitiligo at community.today.com/parentingteam/post/untitled_1503499457.*

# Your thoughts

Veterans Day got its start in November 1919 when President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the original concept for the celebration was for a day observed with parades and public meetings and a brief suspension of business beginning at 11 a.m. In 1954, November 11 became a day to honor American veterans of all wars. Despite falling under the Uniform Holiday Bill for a few years, since 1978 the annual observance of Veterans Day has been commemorated on its original date of November 11.

## *Here's some of what Veternas Day means to our readers:*

**We should all take a moment to acknowledge both the past and current veterans who have served in our armed forces. To reflect and understand their commitment to protecting our freedoms is the common thread that enables all of us to pursue our own hopes and dreams.**
***– Paul Lombardo***

**To feel safe in our country and to honor the men and women that keep us safe.**
***– Pam Schlegel***

**My father and all my uncles served in WW II in various capacities, including one who served in the Battle of the Bulge and lived to tell about it. The sacrifice that those veterans made, and the ones since – Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War, Afghanistan and those currently serving – are significant and important. The least we can do is honor them with a day of remembrance.**
***– Sherry Pensak***

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11/30 **John Mulaney** - Comedy
12/2 **Boston Pops Holiday Concert**
12/6 **Takacs Quartet**
Mozart, Shostakovich, Brahms
12/9 **Natalie MacMaster & Donnell Leahy**
*A Celtic Family Christmas*
2/10 **Ladysmith Black Mambazo**
2/13 **TAO: Drum Heart** - Taiko Drumming
2/17 **Dianne Reeves** - Jazz Diva
2/25 **Mr. Popper's Penguins** - Kid's Show
3/8 **Danu** - Irish Music Concert
3/18 **Erth's Dinosaur Zoo Live!** - Kid's Show
3/20 **Joyce DiDonato** - Metropolitan Opera Star
3/24 **Kristin Chenoweth** - TV, Broadway Star
4/5 **Giselle** - Moscow Festival Ballet
4/18 **Jessica Lang Dance**
4/24 **Punch Brothers**
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# A chapter ends, a new chapter begins

## Local wine expert Charles Bissell closes his shop, retires

**by Nancy Thompson**
*Editor*

For more than three decades, Charles Bissell has dedicated himself to the study – and the appreciation – of fine wines.

He's shared his expertise happily with friends and with customers at his shop, Charles Fine Wine.

In September, Bissell closed the store that he opened in Somerset Square in the late '80s and moved to Main Street eight years later.

Unlike many beverage shops, Bissell's was devoted almost entirely to wine.

"I wanted to focus on one product and do really well with that product," he said. "And I did it for 30 years."

He said he carried "a tiny bit of liquor, single malts and bourbon," but said it accounted for only about one percent of his business. Now, with many craft beers and artisanal liquors, he could have expanded, but he wanted to keep the shop's focus on wine.

"It would be like an ice cream shop selling pastries and sandwiches," he said.

Bissell, who can trace his ancestors back 11 generations to John Bissell, an Englishman who settled in Windsor in 1639, operated a ferry across the Connecticut River and is the person for whom the Bissell Bridge is named, led a privileged childhood, attending private schools and living in an apartment on Park Avenue in New York. After graduating from Loomis-Chaffee School he went to Ripon College in Wisconsin, where he majored in anthropology and archeology.

He also learned about wine.

While he was in college his uncle, who was also his godfather and the head of the French department at Choate, gave Bissell, then 21, a book about wine with the inscription, "I hope this piques your interest in wine." It did.

"I loved the book, I loved the pictures" Bissell said. He thought it was a good subject to learn but acknowledged that he knew nothing about it.

He still remembers the evening about 40 years ago when he had his first glass of very fine wine.

"I can remember it like it was yesterday," he said. "It was a fabulous bottle of red burgundy."

When he graduated from college his parents sent him to France for a year. Through a business contact of his stepfather, Bissell was introduced to seven wine-making families in Burgundy, one of France's most important wine-producing regions.

"I was paid nothing. I did all the work that was required and we tasted wine every day," he said. He knew then that he would never work in anthropology or archeology. Instead, his life's work would be wine.

He returned to Connecticut in 1980 with a newfound wealth of knowledge and speaking French like a native.

He found a job in the wholesale wine industry but didn't enjoy it. From there, he managed a retail wine store in West Hartford and then in Hartford and realized that he wanted to open his own shop.

He'd had no business classes, but he was a voracious learner, attending wine tastings throughout the country and reading. "I constantly had my face in a wine book," he said.

He signed a lease for a store at the then-new Somerset Square.

"I started from zero," he said. "The first day I sold one six-pack of beer."

As his business grew he focused more and more on fine wine and moved to Main Street, just south of Daybreak Coffee Roasters. "It was a great location and had great parking," he said. "The space was very manageable for one person to run."

He's hoping to sell the business to someone who shares his interest and expertise in wine and who will continue the tradition he started long ago.

"The store has been very good to me," he said as he looked ahead to his semi-retirement. He'll be helping his wife, Laurene McGarry, an interior designer and the owner of Eclectic Designs, mostly by doing tasks that will let her spend less time driving around and more time designing.

He'd like to travel, but since McGarry is very busy with her business he said they'll probably only take a weekend from time to time.

Over time, many of his customers have become friends.

"Through the years my wife and myself became friends of Charles besides being his customers," said Gregory Benedetto, who has known Bissell since his days in Somerset Square. "He has a wonderful personality, friendly and patient, besides having an encyclopedic knowledge of wine. I've always trusted him to make the right decisions on wine for me. We'll miss going to the store and seeing him there. But he's earned a rest. And we're still good friends and will see him in Glastonbury."

"A bright spot in the center of Glastonbury has been extinguished by Charles closing," said Marshall Robinson, another long-time customer turned friend.

Robinson said he has known Bissell since the late 1980s, primarily as a customer.

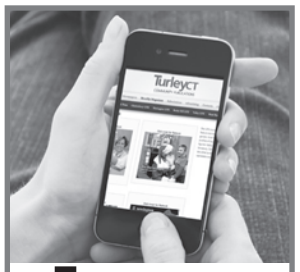
"I once told Charles that his shop was my wine cellar since I could always see him for any bottle I needed," he said, adding that he has always been impressed by Bissell's knowledge and his passion in discussing various wines and how to match a wine with a food.

"Charles was especially interested in educating his customers and, in the earlier days conducted tastings on Saturday afternoons. I owe to the accompanying discussions and comparative characteristics of wines being sampled much of what I know about fine wine. Charles was always completely open and friendly with everyone who walked into his shop creating a social atmosphere that, for me, resulted in several lifetime friendships from staff and fellow customers."

Robinson shared a family story about his experiences with Bissell and his shop.

"My daughter Sarah, who was eight or nine at the time, often accompanied me to Charles' Saturday afternoon tastings and was always treated to a grape soda while I tasted the 'good stuff'," he said. "I can report that Sarah and her husband Dan graduated from soda to the annual Christmas present of a case of wine from Charles's shop."

While no longer officially in the business, Bissell continues to be willing to offer advice about fine wines. When asked by Glastonbury LIFE for his personal favorites, he recommended a red burgundy from Gevrey-Chambertin and whites from Puligny Montrachet. **GL**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# November calendar

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| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
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| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | |

**1** **"Healthcare: A Right or a Privilege?" community conversation,** 6:30 p.m., Riverfront Community Center, 300 Welles Street.

**Meditation techniques,** 6:30 p.m., Friends Room, Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St., Registration required, 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com

**4** **Nature Photography 101,** noon to 2 p.m., CT Audubon Society Center, 1361 Main St. $25 members, $35 non-members. 860-633-8402 or ctaudubon.org.

**6** **The state and needs of Connecticut's bees,** 7 p.m., CT Audubon Society Center, 1361 Main St. 860-633-8402 or ctaudubon.org.

**7** **Election Day.** Schools closed.

**8** **Animal mascots of the Civil War,** 6:30 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St., Register at 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com

**9** **Discussion of stress, anxiety and nutrition** presented by nutritionists Jen Thomas and Evelyn DeDominics, POP Weight Loss, 6:30 p.m., 74 New London Turnpike. 860-918- 9176 or jthomas@popweightloss.com

**10** **A Christmas Carol,** GHS auditorium, 7 p.m. Tickets at the door or showtix4u.com.

**11** **A Christmas Carol,** GHS auditorium, 7 p.m. Tickets at the door or showtix4u.com.

**13** **Board of education,** 7:30 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. 860-652-7961 or glastonburyus.org.

**14** **Town council,** 7 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. 860-652-7710 or glastonbury-ct.gov.

**15** **Climate Change: Separating Science from Spin** sponsored by the Land Heritage Coalition, 7 p.m., Riverfront Community Center, 300 Welles Street.

**16** **Flu clinic,** 1 to 5 p.m., Academy Building, 2143 Main Street. Bring insurance card and photo ID, complete consent form online at Glastonbury-ct.gov.

**17** **Glastonbury Education Foundation Gala,** 6 to 11 p.m., A Villa Louisa.

**A Christmas Carol,** GHS auditorium, 7 p.m. Tickets at the door or showtix4u.com.

**18** **Genealogy group** sponsored by the Welsh Society of Western New England, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Participants are asked to bring their Welsh family tree and a lunch dish to share. Workshop will include a presentation at noon about genealogy websites. $3. Reserve a spot by emailing WelshWNE@gmail.com. Directions will be forwarded at that time.

**A Christmas Carol,** GHS auditorium, 7 p.m. Tickets at the door or showtix4u.com.

**19** **A New England Thanksgiving,** noon to 3 p.m., Welles-Shipman-Ward House, 972 Main Street. No charge for members of the Historical Society of Glastonbury, $5 for others. 860-633-6890 or visit hsgct.org.

**20** **Lincoln, the Gettysburg Address and the transformation of the Civil War,** 6:30 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. Register at 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com

**21** **Town plan and zoning commission,** 7 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. glastonbury-ct.gov.

**22** **Welles-Turner Memorial Library closing** at 5 p.m.

**23** **Thanksgiving. Town offices and library closed.**

**26** **Bob Hennessey harmonica concert,** 2 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. Reservations required at 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com.

**27** **Board of education,** 7:30 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. 860-652-7961 or glastonburyus.org.

**28** **Town council,** 7 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. 860-652-7710 or glastonbury-ct.gov.

# Events spotlight

## Community Conversation on Healthcare

November 1, 6:30 to 9 p.m.

*Riverfront Community Center*

*David O'Connor at 860- 633-2405 or davidandprem@yahoo.com, Leslie Ohta at 202-538-1161 or leslieohta@gmail.com, or glastonburymlkci.org*

This event is the third "community conversation" hosted by the Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative will focus on healthcare, whether it is a basic need and how best to provide it. The panel will include Lynne Ide: Ms. Ide, director of program and policy at the Universal Healthcare Foundation of CT; Jason Madrak, vice president for Connecticut at Harvard Pilgrim Healthcare, a not-for-profit insurer; Kate McEvoy: director of the division of health services at the Connecticut Department of Social Services; Prasad Srinivasan, medical doctor who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of allergies and also represents Glastonbury in the Connecticut General Assembly; Victoria Veltri, chief health policy advisor in the Office of Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman, where she coordinates the state's health reform initiatives; and James Wadleigh, chief executive officer of Access Health CT. Laurence Fleming, who has a background in law and insurance, will facilitate the discussion. Several advocacy groups will have tables where participants will have the opportunity to learn about their mission and work and explore volunteer opportunities.

## The state of the state's bees

November 6, 7 p.m.

*Connecticut Audubon Society Center, 1361 Main Street*

*glastonbury@ctaudubon.org or 860-633-8402*

Kimberly Stoner, an entomologist at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, will talk about the state and needs of Connecticut's bees, which play a vital role in pollination, not only of food crops but also many of the native plants in the ecosystem. She will give an overview of bee diversity in Connecticut, where there are 349 species, talk about the stresses bees face from parasites, pathogens, pesticides, and loss of habitat, and discuss what can be done to create a safe and productive habitat for a wide diversity of bees. There is a $5 charge for society members, $10 for non-members.

## Climate Change –Separating Science from Spin

November 15, 7 p.m.

*Riverfront Community Center, lhcglastonbury.org or 860-652-8995.*

Is it real, or is it a hoax? Gary Yohe, a professor of economics and environmental studies at Wesleyan University, will try to shed some light on the issue of climate change from the scientific perspective with reference to the underlying economics. This free talk is sponsored by The Land Heritage Coalition of Glastonbury, Inc., which has chosen the subject for this program year.

In his discussion, Yohe is expected to address climate change from a scientific perspective as well as share some of his experiences. To learn more about the coalition, visit lhcglastonbury.org or call 860-652-8995.

## Thanksgiving in Colonial New England

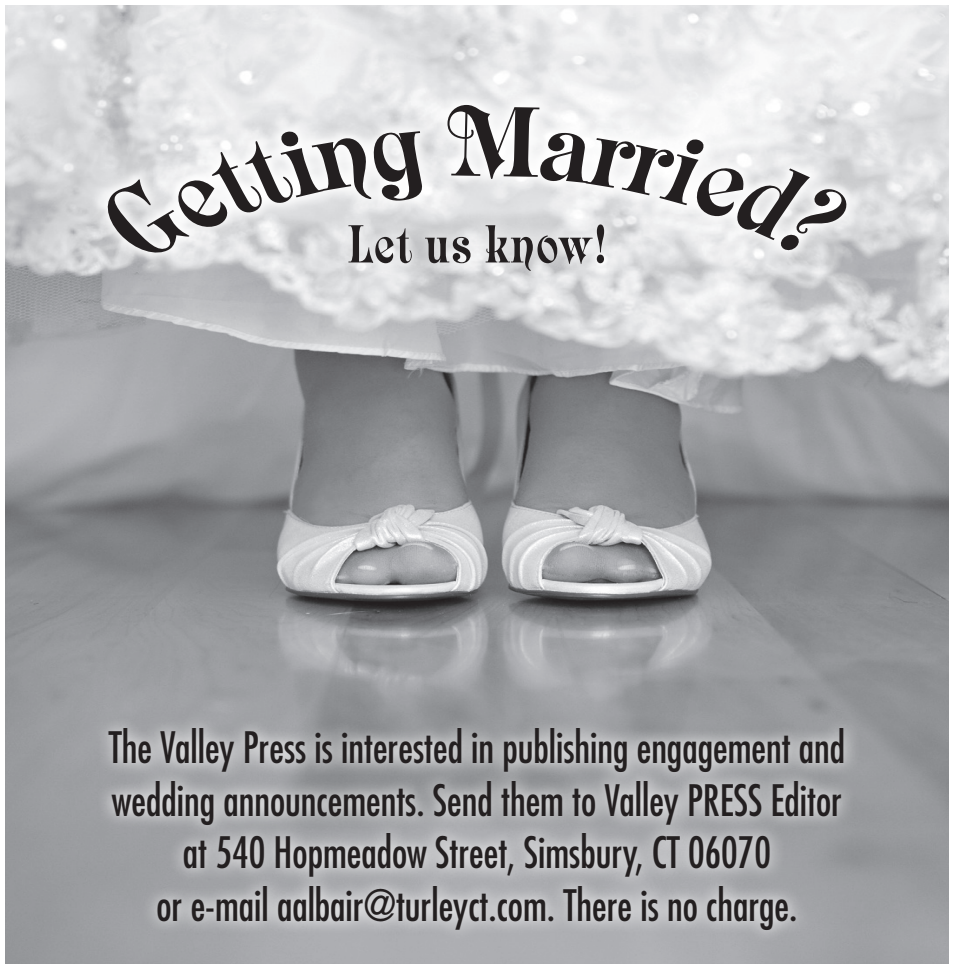
November 19, noon to 3 p.m.

*Welles-Shipman-Ward House, 972 Main Street*

*860-633-6890 or hsgct.org*

For the people of colonial New England, the most exciting holiday of the year was Thanksgiving. They celebrated the harvest, their blessings, and renewed family ties and friendships as families traveled from afar to join together on this special day and people spent many hours and days in preparation for reunions and feasting.

Participants will be able to tour the historic house, watch as the historical society's cooks prepare food, and sample chicken pie, cranberry pie and Marlborough pudding, a lemon custard with apples.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# Letters

## George isn't afraid of tough decisions

**To the Editor:**

I write in support of my colleague Eric George's re-election to the board of education in November. Eric has demonstrated thoughtfulness and a willingness to consider all points of view, especially when faced with tough decisions. He will continue to support a high level of education in Glastonbury while insisting on prudent use of taxpayer dollars during these difficult budget cycles. The residents of Glastonbury are fortunate to have a candidate as well qualified as Eric who is prepared to serve on the board. Please join me in voting for Eric on November 7.

*– Jeremy Grieveson*

*Editor's note: Jeremy Grieveson is vice-chair of the board of education*

## Residents can count on George

**To the Editor:**

Please join me and vote for Eric George for board of education on November 7 so he can continue to lead the Glastonbury school district in its pursuit of excellence despite the fiscal challenges we face due the State of Connecticut's failure to meet its obligations. The absence of leadership in state government and mismanagement of the taxes our residents and those of other well managed and fiscally responsible towns pay has created a sit

We need someone like Eric who takes the time to listen and evaluate all points of view irrespective of political party before reaching his decision on any given issue. He doesn't shy away from difficult decisions like closing an elementary school in order to ensure the true needs of students are met while the burden on taxpayers isn't ignored. One may not always agree with him but when all is said and done you'll certainly know where he stands. Eric George is someone we can count on to make the thoughtful, balanced, bi-partisan decisions we're going to need in the next few years if we're to provide the quality education parents have come to expect at a price we can afford. Thank you.

*– Jim Zeller*

## George's passion is education

**To the Editor:**

This letter will hopefully shed some light and inform you on a candidate for the board of education, Eric George. Eric has served for four years on the board as an excellent representative for the voters in Glastonbury. His mindset, his focus, his passion is education, education, education. This is always Eric's first consideration when making the necessary choices and decisions regarding the education for the children of Glastonbury.

His expectations are exceedingly high for the educational system in our town, and knowing this is important when he needs to balance the highest quality of teachers and learning environments and the cost per pupil. The air conditioning issue is definitely a topic he factors in along with many other difficult issues. Eric's Number One concern is always the education provided to all of Glastonbury's children. Please vote for Eric George on November 7 for board of education.

*– Judy Stearns*

## Reelect George

**To the Editor:**

I am writing to ask for your support in reelecting Eric George to our board of education.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Eric George for many years and know he is the perfect candidate to continue this position. I have seen how he handles his business with focus. I know his children and they are a shining example of Eric's dedication to any and every aspect of his life.

I ask again please support Eric George for reelection to the Glastonbury Board of Education.

*– David Valle*

## Norman will be an asset

**To the Editor:**

I have had the opportunity to work with George Norman for many years. George is extremely knowledgeable, has a wide range of experience, and communicates, very effectively. He is soft spoken but gets his message across loud and clear. I know he will be a wonderful asset to our town council. He is a team player, but also thinks outside the box and works very well with people. I would urge the residents of Glastonbury to take a good look at George Norman's resume. I know you will then come to the same conclusion that I have, that he will serve our town well as a member of the town council.

*– Prasad Srinivasan*

*Editor's note: Prasad Srinivasan is a state representative for Glastonbury*

## Supports Foyle for BOE

**To the Editor:**

I am writing to express my support for Doug Foyle as a candidate for the Glastonbury Board of Education. Over the past eight years, Doug has consistently advocated for the best interests of the students of Glastonbury schools while maintaining a focus on looking for efficiencies in the budget in order to make the most effective use of taxpayer dollars. He listens and responds to input from parents and fellow citizens and uses that information when making decisions on the board. I am always impressed with Doug's thoughtful, in-depth analysis of every issue which comes before the board and his ability to make sensible, knowledgeable decisions that support and promote excellence in education for all of the children of Glastonbury.

I strongly encourage voters to vote for Doug on November 7.

*– Julie Thompson*

*Editor's note: Julie Thompson is a member of the board of education* **GL**

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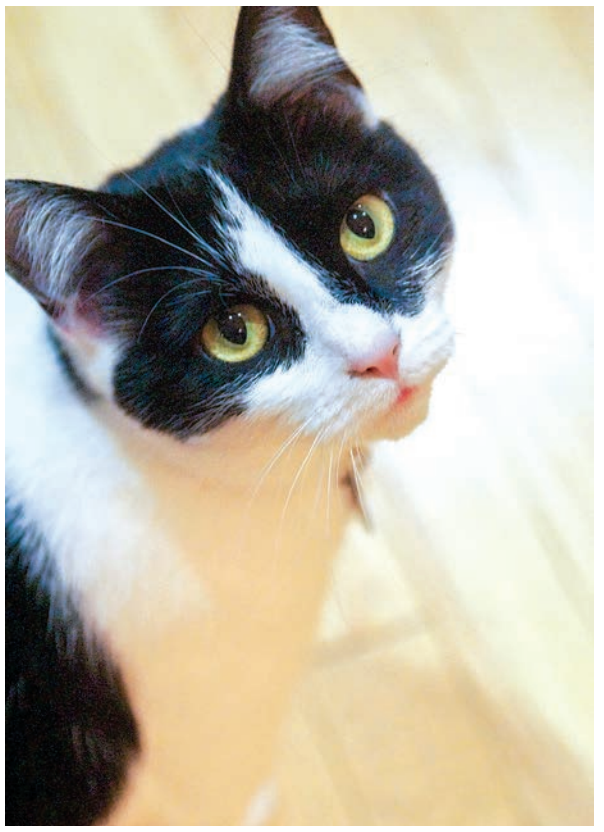
# Note from Nancy



## Love at first purr

## Celebrating a year with our little doll

It's been about a year since we lost Cozette, the kitty who shared our home and enriched our lives for more than 20 years. We knew we wanted to adopt another cat but thought we should wait at least a couple of weeks to mourn our little friend.

We lasted all of 12 days.

Actually, I started looking at websites for shelters in the area even sooner. The house was entirely too quiet. I'd cry in the morning when no kitty greeted me in the kitchen. I'd cry in the evening when no kitty snuggled at my feet. Heck – I'd cry driving around Glastonbury in the middle of the day because no kitty would be waiting for me when I got home.

When we learned that the two shelters closest to us were only open on weekends we trashed the idea of waiting a full two weeks and headed out.

I'd filled out an online form for the first place we visited, where the volunteers directed us to a couple of adorable young cats. We didn't want a kitten, but we also didn't want an old cat or one with a chronic health issue, not because we wouldn't care for it well or because they didn't deserve a loving home, but because we'd spent two of the previous three years dealing with chronic illnesses and an assortment of medications and tests and emergencies, and because we hadn't had a young, active cat in the house for nearly 15 years.

We were getting to know a little gray female when Marvin, the shelter manager, walked in waving my application form. "We only do age-appropriate adoptions," he said loudly, pointing to the line with my age, as if I didn't know how old I was. "You'll have to look at cats at least seven years old."

I'd heard about this practice elsewhere and was – I thought – prepared. I told him we'd spoken with our daughter, who assured us she'd adopt our kitty if we were ever unable to keep it. Not good enough for Marvin. "Everyone says that," he said. "Then they don't do it."

I tried a different tack. "What if a young couple came in and adopted a cat and then were killed in a car accident? What if they divorced and both moved some place that didn't allow pets?" Again, not good enough for Marvin. I was possibly – okay, definitely – being loud and causing a scene. My husband touched my arm and suggested we leave.

As we walked out Marvin mentioned that the shelter up the road didn't have an "age-appropriate" policy.

We debated going home to regroup but stopped at the other place. I'd checked them out online as well and liked the photo and write-up for a three-year-old kitty named Dolly.

The woman in charge took us to meet Dolly. I picked her up and looked into her eyes and melted. It was love at first purr. I'm still not sure if we rescued her or if she rescued us.

She is wonderful – affectionate, friendly, smart and hilariously funny. When I sent the shelter a contribution for their membership drive, the chairman of the board emailed me to say thanks and to tell me how thrilled they all were that Dolly, who had been rescued from a hoarding situation, ended up in such a loving home.

"We love and care about all the cats and dogs who come through the shelter, but Dolly is one who we will always remember – and that her story has such a happy ending makes it all the better," she wrote.

It may have been an ending for them, but for us it's been the beginning of what we hope will be many years of kitty love.

*– Nancy Thompson*

glastonbury LIFE

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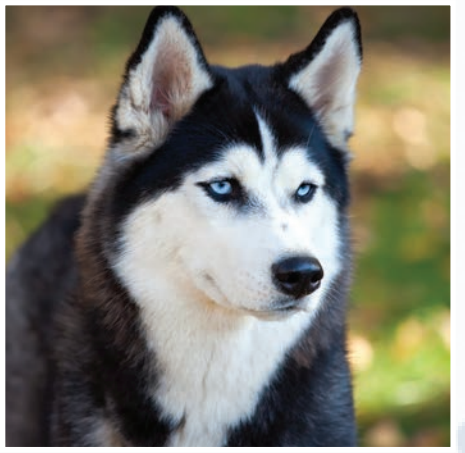

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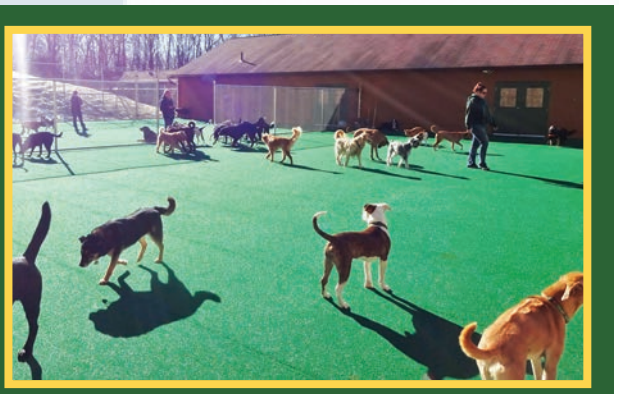

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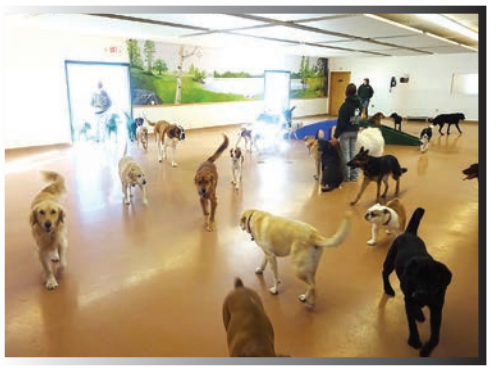

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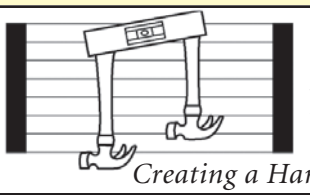

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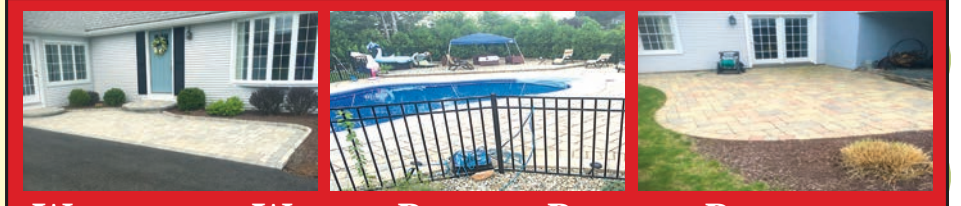

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## Gamblers Anonymous

**Gamblers Anonymous can help you.** Take back your life. Phone: 855-2-CALL-GA 855-222-5542 to speak with someone. Gamblers Anonymous is a non-profit fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from a gambling problem. www.gamblersanonymous.org.

## Overeaters Anonymous

**FOOD: Are you over-involved with food?** Would you like that to be different? Consider attending an OA meeting and find out what is involved. For more information, meeting times and places call CT OA at 860-840-2475, or look us up at: www.ConnecticutOA

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BY MARK DIXON
WFSB METEOROLOGIST [AMS]

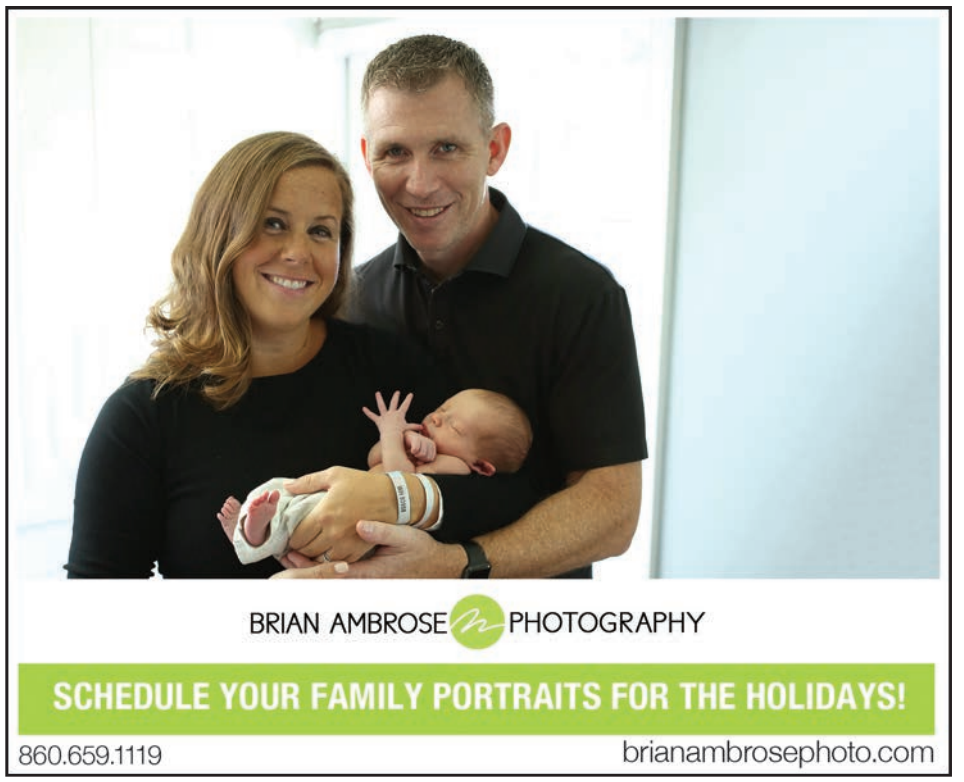
# Daylight Saving Time!

As of November 1st we have already lost 4 hours and 53 minutes of possible daylight, since the summer solstice occurring back on June 21st. By the time we reach the winter solstice in December (on the 21st), we will lose another 1 hour and 14 minutes of daylight.

Over the course of the summer, we enjoyed sunsets as late as 8:30pm; now, it's getting dark in the 5 o'clock hour. This year, November 5th marks the official end of Daylight Saving Time (DST). At 2 am, we 'fall back' and many think we 'gain' an hour of time (while in the spring we lose it). However, we are reallocating that hour. After the 5th, we'll initially see more sun earlier in the day as sunset times shift to the 4 o'clock hour.

This practice of moving time, initially to make better use of daylight and to decrease energy consumption, dates back to early 20th century Europe. In the United States, implementation happened in the 1950s and 60s and not every state participates in this clock-turning tradition. Furthermore, 10 years ago, Congress made a change to start DST 3 weeks earlier and end it 1 week later.

When setting your clocks, this is also a good time to change the batteries in your smoke detectors! **GL**

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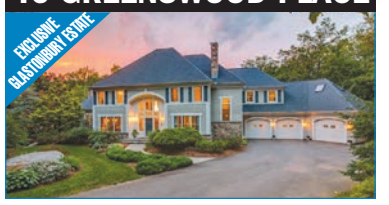


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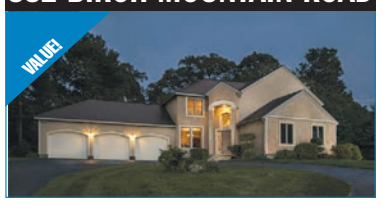


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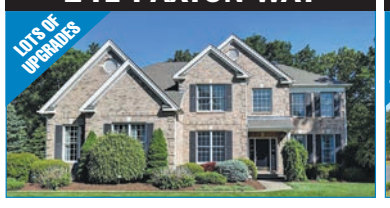


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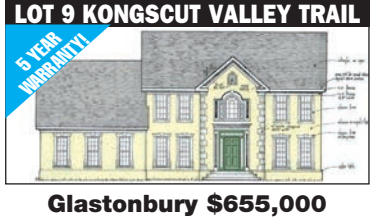


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